

Portrayals of Economic Exchange
in the Book of Kings

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Portrayals of Economic Exchange in the Book of Kings

By
Roger S. Nam



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CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	ix
Abbreviations	xi
1. The Economies of Ancient Israel	1
1.1. Presuppositions and Methods	3
1.2. The Text of Kings as a Source	5
1.3. The Text of Kings as History	10
1.4. The Economies of Ancient Israel: A Survey of Research	17
1.5. Conclusions	27
2. Economic Anthropology	29
2.1. Theories of Political Economy	30
2.1.a. Classical Political Economy	30
2.1.b. Karl Marx	34
2.1.c. Max Weber	43
2.2. The Pioneering Economic Anthropologists	46
2.3. Karl Polanyi	51
2.3.a. <i>The Great Transformation</i>	51
2.3.b. Reciprocity	53
2.3.c. Redistribution	54
2.3.d. Market Exchange	56
2.3.e. The Problem of Terminology	57
2.4. Reactions to Polanyi	59
2.4.a. Economic Anthropology	61
2.4.b. Assyriology	63
2.4.c. The Informal Economy	65
2.4.d. Biblical Studies	67
2.5. Summary and Conclusions	68
3. Symmetrical Reciprocity in the Book of Kings	70
3.1. Reciprocity in the Ancient Near East	70
3.2. Reciprocity among Polities	76
3.2.a. King Solomon and King Hiram of Tyre	76
3.2.b. King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba	84
3.2.c. Hezekiah and Merodach-Baladan	87

3.3. Non-Elite Reciprocity	89
3.3.a. Refusing Reciprocity to Subvert	90
3.3.b. Offering Reciprocity to Empower	96
3.3.c. Non-Elite Reciprocity as Informal Economy	98
3.3.d. Historical Considerations	99
3.4. Summary and Conclusions	100
4. Asymmetrical Redistribution in the Book of Kings	102
4.1. The Redistributive Economy in Pre-Exilic Israel	104
4.1.a. Iron Age IIA (980–840/830 BCE): State Formation	106
4.1.b. Iron Age IIB (840/830–732/701 BCE): Neo-Assyrian Threat	117
4.1.c. Iron Age IIC (732/701–605/587 BCE): Foreign Hegemony	127
4.2. State Redistribution	131
4.2.a. Solomonic Redistribution	131
4.2.b. Temple Redistribution	139
4.2.c. The Exception to State Redistribution: Patrimonial Land	143
4.3. International Redistribution	145
4.3.a. The Items of Tribute	146
4.3.b. The Ideology of Tribute	147
4.4. Theoretical Reconsiderations: The Reciprocity of Redistribution	150
4.5. Summary and Conclusions	153
5. Market Exchange in the Book of Kings	154
5.1. Did Ancient Israel Know Price-Determining Markets? The State of the Question	154
5.2. Possible References to Market Exchange	155
5.2.a. 1 Kings 9:26–28; 10:11–12, 22, 28–29: Solomon’s Long- Distance Trade	155
5.2.b. 1 Kings 20:34: Israelite Merchants in Damascus	164
5.2.c. 2 Kings 6:24–25; 7:1–18: Price Movements in Besieged Samaria	167
5.2.d. 2 Kings 4:1–7: The Widow’s Sale of Oil	170
5.3. References to Silver	172
5.4. Did Israel Know Price Setting Markets?	177
5.5. Summary and Conclusions	179

6. A Social Analysis of Exchange in the Book of Kings	181
6.1. Ancient Israel as a Mixed Economy	181
6.2. Ancient Israel as an Informal Economy	182
6.3. The Economic System of Israel and Judah	185
6.3.a. The Local Economy	186
6.3.b. The International Economy	189
7. Summary and Conclusions	192
7.1. Overall Summary and Conclusions	192
7.2. Directions for Future Research: Post-exilic Portrayals of Economic Exchange	193
Select Bibliography	195
Index of Ancient Sources	209
Index of Modern Authors	214
Subject Index	219

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Roger S. Nam
Lake Oswego, Oregon
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ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
<i>AfO</i>	<i>Archiv für Orientforschung</i>
ANET	<i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament</i> . Edited by J.B. Pritchard. Princeton, 1954
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
AJSR	<i>Association for Jewish Studies Review</i>
AnSt	<i>Anatolian Studies</i>
ARAB	<i>Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia</i> . Daniel David Luckenbill. 2 vols. Chicago, 1926–1927
ARM	Archives royales de Mari
AUSS	<i>Andrews University Seminary Studies</i>
BA	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BAR	<i>Biblical Archaeology Review</i>
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools for Oriental Research</i>
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
BINS	Biblical Interpretation Series
BTB	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CAD	<i>The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i> . Chicago, 1956–2011
CANE	<i>Civilizations of the Ancient Near East</i> . Edited by J. Sasson. 4 vols. New York, 1995
CBQ	<i>Catholic Bible Quarterly</i>
COS	<i>The Context of Scripture</i> . Edited by W.W. Hallo. 3 vols. Leiden, 1997–2003
DULAT	del Olmo Lete, G. and J. Sanmartín, <i>Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition</i> . Translated by W.G.E. Watson. Leiden, 2003
EA	El-Amarna Tablets. According to the edition of J.A. Knudtzon. <i>Die el-Amarna-Tafeln</i> . Leipzig, 1908–1915. Reprint, Aalen, 1964. Continued in A.F. Rainey, <i>El-Amarna Tablets</i> , 359–379. 2d revised ed. Keelaer, 1979
FOTL	Forms of Old Testament Literature
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments

<i>HALOT</i>	Koehler, L., W. Baumgartner and J.J. Stamm, <i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Translated and edited under the supervision of M.E.J. Richardson. Leiden, 1994–1999
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HSS	Harvard Semitic Studies
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
<i>IEJ</i>	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
<i>IKaZ</i>	<i>Internationale katholische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
Jastrow	Jastrow, M.A. <i>Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature</i> . 2d ed. New York, 1903
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JESHO</i>	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hebrew Scriptures</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
Joüon	Joüon, P. <i>A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew</i> . Translated and revised by T. Muraoka. 2 vols. <i>Subsidia biblica</i> 14/1–2. 2d ed. Rome, 2006
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>JTOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JTOTSS</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the of the Old Testament</i> —Supplement Series
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
<i>KTU</i>	<i>Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit</i> . Edited by M. Dietrich, O. Loretz and J. Sanmartín. <i>AOAT</i> 24/1. Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1976. 2d enlarged ed. of <i>KTU: The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani, and Other Places</i> . Edited by M. Dietrich, O. Loretz and J. Sanmartín. Münster, 1995
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible / Old Testament Series
<i>NEA</i>	<i>Near Eastern Archaeology</i>
<i>NEAEHL</i>	<i>The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land</i> . Edited by E. Stern. 5 vols. Jerusalem. 1993, 2008
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
<i>OEANE</i>	<i>The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East</i> . Edited by E.M. Meyers. New York, 1997
<i>Or</i>	<i>Orientalia</i>
<i>PEQ</i>	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>
<i>PRU</i>	<i>Le palais royale d'Ugarit</i>
<i>PSB</i>	<i>Princeton Seminary Bulletin</i>

<i>QDAP</i>	<i>Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine</i>
<i>RelSRev</i>	<i>Religious Studies Review</i>
<i>RIMA</i>	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods
<i>SBLDS</i>	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
<i>Sem</i>	<i>Semeia</i>
<i>SJOT</i>	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
<i>STDJ</i>	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
<i>SAHL</i>	Studies in the Archaeology and History of the Levant
<i>TA</i>	<i>Tel Aviv</i>
<i>TRu</i>	<i>Theologische Rundschau</i>
<i>TS</i>	<i>Theological Studies</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
<i>WO</i>	<i>Die Welt des Orients</i>
<i>ZA</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie</i>
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZDPV</i>	<i>Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>

CHAPTER ONE

THE ECONOMIES OF ANCIENT ISRAEL

Economic life permeates through every aspect of humanity. Each society must make decisions regarding economic matters such as demand, production, modes of exchange, units of consumption, distributive process, future versus present orientation and risk. Accordingly, these fundamental economic issues reflect deeper ideological values, as the systems to distribute goods are intricately tied to political organization and the allocation of resources. The actual decision-makers, and their aggregate economic units, have lasting repercussions on structures of power. But in studying the past, scholars tend to artificially separate economic matters from other social-scientific categories such as political, religious and sociological concerns. With limited evidence, analysis of the ancient social world requires such categorization. Yet one must always recognize that ancient peoples did not see economics as a discreetly isolated component of life. Rather, the past is deeply integrated. To a large extent, economic influence must have motivated religious matters, and conversely, religious processes had lasting fiscal influence.

The economic structures of ancient Israel undoubtedly had a profound impact on society and consequently, the formation of biblical literature. Textualization occurred within distinct social settings, and financial concerns served a fundamental component of these settings. In a brief, yet remarkable passage in 2 Kings 4:7, a prophet commands a poor widow, "Go sell the oil and pay your debt." Within this simple command, the text alludes that the most disenfranchised person of the ancient Near East had the power to sell a commodity at a public market, and then use the proceeds to satisfy the demands of her debtor. Thus, the narrative suggests the existence of some sort of accessible exchange mechanism, as well as the ability to find a suitable buyer. Also, the text intimates a utilitarian value for the oil in addition to its usage as a transferable product. Ultimately, the passage has an ideological message, but in producing such a message, the text must make certain economic assumptions. The intended theological impression only works with an understanding of the urgency of debt, the futility of the debtor and the ominous repercussions of default.

This and other similar passages permeate the biblical narratives, leaving fingerprints of a greater social structure. Every text contains unstated

presuppositions regarding the economic setting of the narrative, song, proverb, law, genealogy, blessing or curse. Within each economic activity, the text leaves a clue. While many biblical scholars have examined theological perspectives on economic matters, to date, no one has attempted to provide a comprehensive analysis of the nature of exchange itself as portrayed in biblical texts.

The present work attempts to critically look at 1 and 2 Kings in an effort to postulate on the various mechanisms of exchange imbedded within the text, with the goal of a clearer assessment of the nature of ancient Israelite economies. This research project is primarily philological, beginning with the textual witnesses to Kings, not as a direct historiography, but as representative of specific periods of textualization. In considering the wide scope of the topic, the project also utilizes material culture and comparative epigraphy to better understand the social settings. Economic anthropology will provide a methodological foundation to regulate the investigation into the sources. Specifically, the project heuristically assumes Karl Polanyi's paradigm for three exchange types: reciprocity, redistribution and market exchange.¹ Certainly, any one of Polanyi's categories could fill an entire monograph in itself, even within a restricted corpus. But since the field of ancient Israelite economies stands at a preliminary stage, an expansive sweep of the material may provide more informative results. Consequently, the nature and parameters of the project are quite broad, more akin to archaeological survey rather than an in-depth excavation of a single text. Of course, one hopes that future scholarship can continue to refine and augment the results presented here from both macro and microperspectives.

With such an interdisciplinary approach, this study aims to further the understanding of economic systems of ancient Israel that may appear foreign to contemporary readers. Modern economic systems can be so familiar that scholars may easily make anachronistic assumptions without explicit deliberation. As a result, many of the necessary questions have not been answered nor even explicitly asked. These questions include: who is responsible for this exchange? What is being exchanged? How do the social forces regulate the stipulations behind such exchange? What are the real costs associated with the transactions? Who gains and who

¹ Karl Polanyi first gave his grand systematic presentation of his exchange paradigm in *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (Boston: Beacon Press 1944, repr. 2001).

hurts? How does the central power reinforce (un)fair exchange? How do these patterns of exchange differ between the Upper Galilee and the Negev? How did they shift from the Neo-Assyrian to the Persian periods? The elusive answers to all of these questions had repercussions on every level of society. Although the description of economic structures was certainly not the prime intent of the biblical writers and their later redactors, an aggregate view of these portrayals can lead to a better understanding of social dynamics behind the text.

1.1. *Presuppositions and Methods*

The study focuses on the activity of exchange, one of many economic processes in the ancient world.² Production and consumption also have significant functions within any economic system, and these mechanisms can reveal valuable insights concerning greater society. However, exchange works well for the present study for several reasons. First, biblical texts explicitly narrate exchange activities more frequently and descriptively than any other economic process. Second, exchange often carries both complexity and diversity in its description, providing a relatively wide sample for this study. Third, the classification of actual exchange is typically non-ideological in nature, as the biblical writers show more explicit interest in matters such as temple priesthood and royal enthronement. For this reason, the portrayals of exchange modes may potentially have less historical revision than explicitly theological content.

Most importantly, exchange is universal in a non-subsistence organization. Regardless of a group's political system or espoused beliefs, they must make decisions on exchange that reflect underlying social structures. Polanyi recognized this intrinsic quality of exchange in reviewing the research on the Trobriand Islanders: "The result of all these characteristics of primitive societies is the impossibility of organizing the

² The use of "exchange" as term in economic anthropology can be ambiguous and misleading. Even Polanyi does not consistently use the concept of "exchange." For example, he defines exchange as market behavior: "Exchange is a two-way movement of goods between persons oriented toward the gain ensuing for each from the resulting terms," *The Livelihood of Man* (New York: Academic, 1977), 42. Later in that same volume, he refers to "exchange" in reciprocal terms, p. 55. This study uses "exchange" in the modern economic anthropologic sense, in that it refers to a good transferring ownership, regardless of whether in a reciprocal, redistributive or barter capacity; see Colin Renfrew, Paul Bahn, *Archaeology: Theories, Methods and Practice*, 4th ed. (London: Thames and Hudson, 2004), 360.

economy, even in thought, as an entity distinct from the social relations in which its elements are embedded.”³ Polanyi specifically named these social relations to lie within the kinship structures, which regulated the organizational behaviors. Such social behaviors occur so naturally that decision-makers are not explicitly aware of these economic processes.⁴ At the time of Polanyi’s earlier writings, quantifiable theory and scientific measures of Neo-Classicism dominated the Western economic landscape. Analysis on all economic matters did not significantly deviate from Adam Smith’s original formulations, and these theories permeated analysis of economic history. But Polanyi emphasized that pre-capitalist economic exchange was highly embedded within the social matrix. Such a perspective compels the biblical scholar to explore how perceptions, duties and social relations affect economic decisions in the ancient world more than any supply-and-demand. Categorizing exchange within Polanyi’s paradigm allows for such considerations.

The simplicity and pervasiveness of Polanyi’s model provides a useful paradigm for studying these narrative portrayals of exchange. By using his theoretical categories, this subject does not translate into any *a priori* endorsement of “substantivism” in ancient Israel. Much of Polanyi’s enormous influence is due to the straightforwardness of the model rather than his sweeping conclusions. Specifically, Polanyi categorized exchange into three broad rubrics. First, he described reciprocity, exchange based on mutually symbiotic relationships. Second, Polanyi discussed redistribution, where a central power collects resources towards the center, then chooses to redistribute in some form to the periphery. Third, and most controversial, Polanyi sees market exchange regulated by supply-and-demand, forces that were essentially absent from all pre-Industrial Revolution societies.⁵ Much of the literature after Polanyi’s publication centers on the viability of this last category. Despite many of the criticisms and reiterations of Polanyi, his model is still heuristically useful.

³ By primitive, Polanyi refers to every society before eighteenth century England; see *The Livelihood of Man*, 55.

⁴ Polanyi, *The Livelihood of Man*, 56.

⁵ Polanyi mentioned a fourth category, “householding,” though he left it largely undeveloped. This mechanism refers to the ability of individual households to develop and use surplus. Such a category could potentially provide a more refined alternative to reciprocity and redistribution within the ancient Israelite economy, particularly in light of the extended family as the economic social unit. But the identification of householding within the text of 1 and 2 Kings is too limited for this study. See Polanyi, A. Rostein, *Dahomey and the Slave Trade: An Analysis of an Archaic Economy* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), 70.

More than any other economic anthropologist, Polanyi has the most lasting impact in the field of ancient Near Eastern economics. In this sense, the application of Polanyi to ancient Israel forms a fundamental test-case that may contribute to a greater debate over the possibilities of market exchange in antiquity.

1.2. *The Text of Kings as a Source*

This study begins with the textual witnesses to the book of Kings as a source for examining portrayals of exchange. Since the middle of the twentieth century, scholars view Kings as the final part of the lengthy compilation of the Deuteronomistic History (=DtrH), which includes Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges as well as 1 and 2 Samuel.⁶ The scholarly construct of the DtrH has had remarkable longevity considering the capricious nature of biblical scholarship, though arguments over its precise setting continue to abound. More specifically, this study assumes a triple-redaction of the DtrH associated with Helga Weippert as a base theory.⁷ By aligning our exegetical efforts to three historically specific stages, this project hopes to thoughtfully use material culture and epigraphic evidence of a particular period when applicable.

The development and cogency of the triple-redaction theory as a base assumption are well-rehearsed and unnecessary to repeat in more than summary form.⁸ When Martin Noth described the DtrH, he initially envisioned a single exilic author composing this unifying thread to ultimately account for the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of YHWH's people.⁹ Frank Moore Cross, however, sees too large of a discrepancy between the unconditional promises in sections such as 2 Samuel 7

⁶ Though recently, some question the usefulness of the "Deuteronomists" as a scholarly construct. See recent discussions in Mark Leuchter and Klaus-Peter Adam, eds., *Soundings in Kings: Perspectives and Methods in Contemporary Scholarship* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010); Linda S. Shearing and Steven L. McKenzie, eds., *Those Elusive Deuteronomists: The Phenomenon of Pan-Deuteronomism* (JSOTSS 268, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999).

⁷ Helga Weippert, "Die 'Deuteronomistischen' Beurteilungen Der Könige von Israel und Juda und das Problem der Redaktion der Königsbücher," *Bib* 53 (1972): 301–339.

⁸ For a recent articulation of the theory, including a specific application to Deut 12, see Thomas Römer, *The So-Called Deuteronomistic History: A Sociological, Historical and Literary Introduction* (London ; New York: T & T Clark, 2005); and responses Raymond F. Person et al., "In Conversation with Thomas Römer, the So-Called Deuteronomistic History: A Sociological, Historical and Literary Introduction," *JHS* 9 (2009): 2–49.

⁹ Martin Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History* (JSOTSS 15, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981).

with the retribution theology throughout the entire DtrH.¹⁰ Cross posits a double-redaction theory that provided for a Josianic edition, which accounts for the unmitigated proclamation of the eternal promises of God as well as an exilic redaction, which formulated the stern warnings and exhortations. As Cross and his students promulgated and further refined this hypothesis, German scholarship went in a completely different direction. Rudolph Smend outlined the foundations of the Göttingen school.¹¹ On the presupposition of the composite nature of DtrH, Smend isolated a law-oriented “nomistic” (DtrN) redactional layer to the first exilic edition. Two of Smend’s students further developed the complexity of the Göttingen school sources. Walter Dietrich identified a layer endorsing the efficacy of prophecy, or a “prophetic” (DtrP) strand.¹² Timo Veijola applied these concepts to a model of three successive layers of the DtrH, hoping to explain the complex and contradictory layers of the DtrH.¹³ Since the initial formulation of the Göttingen school, the theory has become even more complex than the text, with multiple further subdivisions (DtrN¹, DtrN², etc.). Both the Cross focus on larger unit blocks (*Blockmodell*) and the Göttingen emphasis on layers/thought-units (*Schichtenmodell*) continue to receive reasonably wide-acceptance in North American and Continental scholarship, respectively.¹⁴

But one major problem with both of these models is that they do not allow for the possibility of a substantive Hezekian layer to the DtrH. In

¹⁰ Frank Moore Cross, “The Structure of the Deuteronomistic History,” in *Perspectives in Jewish Learning, Annual of the College of Jewish Studies* (Chicago: Spertus College of Judaica Press, 1968), 9–24; Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 274–289. Several of Cross’ students continued to develop the idea of the double-redaction, particularly Richard Elliott Friedman, *The Exile and Biblical Narrative: The Formation of the Deuteronomistic and Priestly Works* (HSM 22, Chico: Scholars Press, 1981).

¹¹ Rudolf Smend, “The Law and the Nations: A Contribution to Deuteronomistic Tradition History,” in *Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History*, eds. Gary N. Knoppers and J.G. McConville (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 95–110.

¹² Walter Dietrich, “Martin Noth and the Future of the Deuteronomistic History,” in *The History of Israel’s Traditions: The Heritage of Martin Noth*, ed. Steven L. McKenzie (JSOTSS 182, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994), 153–177.

¹³ Timo Veijola, *Das Königtum in der Beurteilung der Deuteronomistischen Historiographie: Eine Redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1977).

¹⁴ Mark Leuchter and Klaus-Peter Adam, “Introduction,” in *Soundings in Kings*, 1–11; William M. Schniedewind, “The Problem with Kings: Recent Study of the Deuteronomistic History,” *RelSRev* 22 (1996): 22–27; Helga Weippert, “Das Deuteronomistische Geschichtswerk: Sein Ziel und Ende in der Neueren Forschung,” *TRu* 50 (1985): 217–249.

order to account for such layer, Helga Weippert argued for a significant pre-Josianic layer, a theory later espoused by Pierre Buis, Baruch Halpern, André Lemaire, Thomas Römer, William Schniedewind and Marvin Sweeney, among others.¹⁵ Weippert agreed with Cross' identification of the two redactions and the *Blockmodell* approach, but she also saw an additional pre-exilic redaction during the Hezekian age in the late eighth century. The internal evidence for this layer is quite impressive, particularly in the Neo-Assyrian ideology that appears to permeate the themes and structures of DtrH as well as the formulaic changes after Hezekiah.¹⁶ In addition, archaeological and epigraphic evidence strongly suggest that the late eighth century, with the emergence of Jerusalem as a true political city, could support a literary project as vast as the DrtH.¹⁷ This Hezekian level later integrates with Josianic "second redaction" of the late seventh century and the final exilic culmination ("third redaction") of the middle of the sixth century.¹⁸

This examination on the portrayals of economic exchange throughout Kings benefits more from the triple-redaction *Blockmodell*. Raymond Person points out that the method of the *Blockmodell* tends to have, "A broader focus on larger plot movements and macro-structures."¹⁹ Thus, the triple redaction theory allows for wide observations on the various exchange methods through a large segment of text. Practically, this assumption helps one to understand that the writing of Kings did not evenly unfold along with the history of the Israelite and Judaeans

¹⁵ Helga Weippert, "Histories' and 'History': Promise and Fulfillment in the Deuteronomistic Historical Work," in *Reconsidering Israel and Judah* (2000), 47–61; Weippert, "Die 'Deuteronomistischen' Beurteilungen," 301–339; Pierre Buis, *Le Livre Des Rois* (Paris: Gabalda, 1997); Baruch Halpern and David S. Vanderhooft, "The Editions of Kings in the 7th–6th Centuries B.C.E.," *HUCA* 62 (1991): 179–224; André Lemaire, "Toward a Redactional History of the Book of Kings," in *Reconsidering Israel and Judah* (2000), 446–461; Lemaire, "Vers l'histoire de la Rédaction des Livres des Rois," *ZAW* 98 (1986): 221–236; Römer, *The So-Called Deuteronomistic History*; Schniedewind, "The Problem with Kings," 22–27; Marvin Sweeney, *1 and 2 Kings* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 20–26. Before Weippert, Alfred Jepsen identified such a Hezekian layer to the DtrH, see *Die Quellen des Königsbuches* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1956), 30–36.

¹⁶ For a summary of the textual evidence to the Hezekian layer of DtrH, see Sweeney, *1 and 2 Kings*, 20–26.

¹⁷ For a summary of the archaeological evidence to attribute a significant Hezekian redaction, see William M. Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book: The Textualization of Ancient Israel* (New York: Cambridge University, 2004), 64–90.

¹⁸ Undoubtedly, literary activity on DtrH occurred in other settings, but following Weippert, Chapters Three, Four and Five will primarily deal with these three defined historical settings.

¹⁹ Person et al., "In Conversation with Thomas Römer," 14.

monarchy, but rather the texts represent certain fixed points with later interpreters. For example, Weippert's triple-redaction allows the testimony of the eighth century material culture of the "first redaction" to help formulate a setting of redistribution within the biblical text. Of course, every passage has its own layers, and accordingly, this study will also pay attention to such diachronic developments. But as this study focuses on the biblical portrayals of exchange, the conclusions and observations do not entirely depend on any *a priori* assumption of either the *Blockmodell*, nor *Schnichtenmodell* approach.

Within the DtrH and even the entire Hebrew Bible, many books could provide an interesting source for this study. But at such a nascent stage of the philological study of Israelite economic structures, Kings serves as the most promising choice as a source for multiple reasons. Most significantly, Kings falls in the genre of historiography, which by its nature descriptively narrates events. Historiography tends to provide more details and context of economic actions compared to other genres such as wisdom or prophecy. Such narration does not necessarily equate to a dispassionate account of the past. Instead, ancient historiography seeks to explain the past in a way instructive to the present and future, especially as these events illuminate the relationship between a distinct people, their relationship with YHWH. With Kings, the narrative specifically reflects on the four centuries of the monarchic rule, and evaluation of each king according to faithfulness to YHWH. In recounting such traditions, the text narrates national and individual actions, many of which reveal implicit assumptions about the economic system.

Because of the broad spatial and diachronic scope of 1 and 2 Kings, it portrays all types of exchange through different periods and different settings. Geographically, the text covers the entire ancient Near East. Internally, Israel and Judah engage in exchange with each other, as well as supporting a period of heavy redistribution during the reign of Solomon.²⁰ Externally, Israel and Judah exchange extensively with their surrounding polities. To the north, they partner with the Phoenician city-states and Anatolia in lucrative long-distance trade.²¹ Although not explicit in the text, the close relations with Phoenicia imply trading destinations throughout the western limits of the Mediterranean Sea. To the south, Israel and

²⁰ 1 Kgs 4:7; 4:20–5:8; 5:27–32; 6:1–7:51; 8:62–63; 9:15–23; 12:4, 10–11; 2 Kgs 14:13–14.

²¹ 1 Kgs 5:27–32; 9; 10:11–22, 26–29.

Judah obtain prestige goods via Egypt and the Arabian Peninsula.²² Israel and Judah send (and occasionally receive) payments to and from Moab, the Aramaean states, the great Neo-Assyrian empire to the east, as well as to the Philistia city-states to the west.²³ The text even portrays lucrative exchange through symbolic constructs, both the nation of Ophir and the ships of Tarshish.²⁴ The final act of exchange occurs with the movement of personnel and treasures from Jerusalem to the conquering polity of the Neo-Babylonian empire.²⁵

Diachronically, the narrative of 1 and 2 Kings covers a vast period of time, from the last days of David's reign and the ascent of Solomon to the United Monarchy throne (970 BCE) to the release of King Johoiachin from prison during the exile (560 BCE). Though the precise chronology of Kings presents certain problems, the text follows a generally linear chronology that follows with Israel's purported history. Thus, the narrative portrays exchange within a United Monarchy, a divided Kingdom, a single vassal within greater empires and finally, an exiled nation. One can easily see all of these periods having significantly different economic systems, even within the framework of a subsequent collective memory.

In accord with its broad geographic and diachronic scope, Kings displays a diversity of economic players (units), commodities and structures associated with exchange. Heads of state exchange, but the text also allows disenfranchised peoples, such as the traveling prophet and the widow to serve as economic units. Foreigners as well as more powerful polities exchange with one another. On certain occasions, the expected positions of power reverse themselves, providing an ironic distributive structure and fueling a literary effect to the text. These economic players trade a wide range of commodities from the luxurious, such as spices, golds and stones, to the subsistent, such as mere loaves of bread.²⁶ Quantities range from the fancifully exorbitant (ten talents of silver and 6000

²² 1 Kgs 10:1–2, 10, 13, 26–29.

²³ 1 Kgs 5:1; 20: 1–8; 2 Kgs 3:4; 8:8–9; 12:17–18; 15:17–22; 16:8–9; 17:3–6; 18:13–18.

²⁴ Though many have speculated on the geographic location of Ophir, there is only one destination that has abundant gold, silver, ivory, apes and peacocks: the imagination of the writer! The reference to "Ophir Gold" in the Tel Qasile ostraca does little to substantiate any actual location; Benjamin Maisler [Mazar], "Two Hebrew Ostraca from Tell Qasile," *JNES* 10 (1951): 265–267. For a parallel comparison, one can consider the discussion on the "Dilmun Shekel," Robert R. Stieglitz, "Ebla and Dilmun," in *Eblaitica: Essays on the Ebla Archives and Eblaitic Language*, eds. Cyrus H. Gordon, Gary A. Rendsburg, and Nathan H. Winter (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1987), 43–46.

²⁵ 2 Kgs 25:11–20.

²⁶ 1 Kgs 10:1–2, 10, 13; 14:3.

shekels of gold to a prophet!) to the meager (lodging for one night).²⁷ These exchanges are temple-based, royal and sometimes private.²⁸ Transactions with land suggest its inalienable tie to the patrimonial line, consistent with many well-documented settings in the ancient Near East.²⁹ Occasionally, the commodity is not a physical good, but an intangible commodity such as labor or trade rights in a city.³⁰ Although archaeological study tends to focus on the elite, *Kings* more evenly portrays exchange on every social level. In doing so, the text provides rare glimpses into the informal economy of ancient Israel in contrast to the silence of material culture and royally-sponsored epigraphy.

Most significantly, *Kings* portrays all three of Polanyi's mechanisms of exchange on both domestic and international levels. In 1 Kings 13, a man-of-God from Judah curses, then heals the arm of King Jeroboam, who then responds with the symmetrically reciprocal act "I will give you a gift." In 1 Kings 20, Ben Hadad of Aram threatens King Ahab with the asymmetrical redistributive proclamation, "Your silver and gold are mine," in which the riches of Israel must move to Damascus, then such resources (theoretically) return to the periphery in the form of safety and protection. The prophet of 2 Kings 4 commands the impoverished widow to participate in a market mechanism with the command, "Go sell the oil and pay your debt." These and additional textual accounts should give us sufficient samples to analyze each of these three economic modes as well as help synthesize these individual portrayals into a greater typology of exchange. This typology best represents the biblical text in its various sources, rather than the actual state of affairs during the Iron Age II in the Southern Levant.

1.3. *The Text of Kings as History*

This usage of 1 and 2 Kings raises epistemological questions over the nature of its historical value. The question does not merely concern general historical reliability, but the question of history primarily pertains to the period to which it reflects, whether Iron Age, Persian or even

²⁷ 2 Kgs 5:5-27; 4:8-13.

²⁸ Most of the redistribution is royal, though it occasionally centers on the temple (1 Kgs 5:27-32; 12:5-17; 22:4-7, 9).

²⁹ 1 Kgs 16:24; 21:1-16; 2 Kgs 8:1-6.

³⁰ 1 Kgs 20:34.

Hellenistic, and whether the narrative can legitimately reflect the social structure. Undoubtedly, 1 and 2 Kings contains a significant amount of folk materials more reflective of storyteller craft than any purported pure historical memory. Even a superficial reading reveals that the compilers had ideological intent along the various stages of its textual transmission. Since the 1970s, biblical scholars and archaeologists have undergone a massive paradigm shift regarding the biblical texts as history. Before the 1970s, most of biblical scholarship saw at least some value in the Hebrew Bible in reconstructing historical accounts from the patriarchs through the Persian period.³¹ However, both philological and archaeological studies in the 1970s began to erode this confidence. Biblical scholars, John Van Seters and Thomas L. Thompson looked at the patriarchal narratives and saw them as mere Iron Age creations with no basis in any Bronze Age historical reality.³² Inevitably, the questions regarding the historical legitimacy of the patriarchal texts of Genesis 12–50 have encroached on all other periods of the Hebrew Bible, including the exodus, conquest, settlement, monarchy, exile and post-exile.³³ A recent movement, often characterized as “minimalism,” argues that all of the purported events in these periods had no historical basis, but were the invention of a group of scribes, who fabricated such events out of specific ideological agenda during the late Persian or Hellenistic periods.³⁴ Predictably, these theories

³¹ Before the 1970s, most American histories of Israel followed the model of William F. Albright, who saw archaeology as a witness to the historical veracity for the Bible's claims about the past. In continental scholarship, most histories followed Albrecht Alt who relied on sociological models combined with historical-critical reconstructions. Alt and his student, Martin Noth took a much more skeptical view of the biblical text, but both Albright and Alt essentially understood that the Bible contained meaningful historical information. See William Foxwell Albright, *The Archaeology of Palestine* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1960); Albrecht Alt, “The Formation of the Israelite State in Palestine,” in *Essays on Old Testament History and Religion* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1966), 173–237; Alt, “The Monarchy in the Kingdom of Israel and Judah,” in *Essays on Old Testament History and Religion* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1967), 239–259. For a summary of the biblical historiography before 1980, see Megan Bishop Moore and Brad E. Kelle, *Biblical History and Israel's Past* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 1–32.

³² Thomas L. Thompson, *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives: The Quest for the Historical Abraham* (BZAW 133, Berlin: De Gruyter, 1974); John Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975).

³³ Moore and Kelle, *Biblical History and Israel's Past*; for the changes in understanding the historicity of the United Monarchy, see Gary N. Knoppers, “The Vanishing Solomon: The Disappearance of the United Monarchy from Recent Histories of Ancient Israel,” *JBL* 116 (1997): 19–27.

³⁴ Aside from Thompson and van Seters, other prominent so-called minimalists include Philip R. Davies, *In Search Of “Ancient Israel”* (JSOTSS 148, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1992); Davies, *The Origins of Biblical Israel*, (LHBOT 485, New York: T & T Clark, 2007);

and their proponents have met a significant amount of critique from conservative voices as well as philologists and other scholars who dispute the interpretation of the evidence.³⁵

Alongside this questioning of historicity in biblical studies, archaeology has also undergone significant methodological changes, which have influenced the task of historiography in biblical studies. This so-called “new archaeology,” associated with Lewis Binford, sought to move beyond mere descriptions and reconstructions, and to explain and analyze the past and its changes.³⁶ In doing so, “new archaeology” has a strong interdisciplinary character, utilizing specialized branches from the social sciences. Archaeologists began to draw on positivist approaches to construct generalizations and hypotheses to explain cultural process. These hypotheses are subject to a level of empirical testing through established methods in other fields. This movement in archaeological science impacted ancient Near Eastern studies with its move beyond mere traditional questions on political history and searches for royal monuments. Instead, “new archaeology” analyses data from categories like demography and comparative ethnography to understand broader issues such as cultural changes. Besides palaces and temples, “new archaeology” seeks to more intentionally consider quantitative data such as domestic architecture, flora and faunal remains.

In addition, “new archaeology” relies on technological innovations to help gather data, tools such as geographical information systems and radar as well as publishing tools such as computer-based modeling. Modern

Niels Peter Lemche, *The Israelites in History and Tradition* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998); Keith W. Whitelam, *The Invention of Ancient Israel: The Silencing of Palestinian History* (London: Routledge, 1996). Somewhat parallel to the development of so-called, “minimalism,” some archaeologists have tried to downdate much of the traditional tenth century United Monarchy material culture by about one hundred years to the reign of Omri; for a summary see Israel Finkelstein, “State Formation in Israel and Judah: A Contrast in Context, a Contrast in Trajectory,” *NEA* 62 (1999): 35–52; Amihai Mazar, “The Debate over the Chronology of the Iron Age in the Southern Levant: Its History, the Current Situation, and a Suggested Resolution,” in *The Bible and Radiocarbon Dating: Archaeology, Text and Science*, eds. Thomas E. Levy, and Thomas Higham (London: Equinox Publishing, 2005), 15–30.

³⁵ Some of the apologetic responses to the so-called “minimalists” include Kenneth A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003); Iain W. Provan, V. Philips Long, and Tremper Longman, *A Biblical History of Israel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003). Some of the most vociferous archaeological rebuttals have come from William G. Dever, *What Did the Biblical Writers Know and When Did They Know It?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001).

³⁶ Lewis R. Binford, *An Archaeological Perspective* (New York: Seminar Press, 1972).

ethnography provides a comparative context to interpret all of this data. Rather than merely reconstructing precise political events, this “new archaeology” sees itself addressing concerns for wider social changes, including the lives of marginalized that did not leave impressive (or any) material remains. As an after effect, scholars considered that the Hebrew Bible was no longer such a comprehensive resource for ancient Israel, but rather a textual collection that displayed the biased viewpoints of a select group of scribal communities. The total impact of “new archaeology” on biblical historical epistemology remains unknown, though it has certainly brought new consideration to the forefront of investigations on Israel’s past.³⁷

This “new archaeology” helped to dialogue with changes in modern historiography. Biblical scholars had already adopted many of the goals of the *Annales* school, emphasizing social history and analysis of the *longue durée* along with environmental factors.³⁸ Critical historians like Hayden White sought to aggressively shift the nature of the historical enterprise against the general perception of the von Rankean paradigm of objectively seeking to “*zeigen, wie es eigentlich gewesen*,” or “indicate what really happened.”³⁹ White argues that history does not give dispassionate reporting of past events, but rather provides a rhetoric of discourse about past events.⁴⁰ Such an approach particularly matches the postmodern rejection of any grand meta-narratives. Predictably, such an approach received a wide range of response from biblical scholars, ranging from wholesale endorsement of White’s narrative view of history and the impossibility

³⁷ One of the reactions to “new archaeology” is the advent of “post-processual archaeology,” associated with Ian Hodder and Scott Hutson, *Reading the Past: Current Approaches to Interpretation in Archaeology*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). This method undermines the overly positivistic confidence of the “new archaeology” and emphasizes the subjectivity in the interpretation of data. For a brief review of the trajectory of “new archaeology” and post-processual archaeology, see Renfrew, *Archaeology: Theories, Methods and Practice*, 40–52.

³⁸ Maxwell Miller and John Haralson Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986); J. Alberto Soggin, *A History of Israel: From the Beginnings to the Bar Kochba Revolt, AD 135*. (London: SCM, 1984).

³⁹ Leopold von Ranke, *The Theory and Practice of History*, ed. George G. Iggers and K. von Moltke (New York: Irvington Publishers, 1983); Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1973); White, *Tropics of Discourse* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

⁴⁰ Historiographers, particularly European ones, scholars also heavily drew from Paul Veyne and provocative titles such as “Plots, not Facts or Geometrical Figures” from Paul Veyne, *Writing History: Essays on Epistemology* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984).

of an accurate recreation of the past to apologetic defense of traditional historiography with the Bible as a primary source.⁴¹

In congruence with these movements in biblical historiography, it is important to explicitly state the historical assumptions on this research in 1 and 2 Kings with hopes of generating a mature interpretation. Such caution is particularly important for the portrayals of 1 and 2 Kings, which begins in the early Iron Age II with the ascension of Solomon and finishes with the Babylonian exile. Although the Iron Age II Levant has a sizeable amount of epigraphic and archaeological evidence to help illustrate the biblical text, the present climate demands caution against over-inference of this evidence.

The following chapters operate with the assumption that the biblical texts can provide reasonable access to the actual economic activities. In line with the increasing complexity of the historiographic questions, this study explicitly utilizes an eclectic approach, recognizing epigraphic finds and archaeology as potential sources of historical value. This project refers to all of these types of sources and even hopes to create dialogue among them. For example, Chapter Three analyzes the biblical exchange activities attributed to Elisha, purportedly from the northern Kingdom of the late ninth, early eighth centuries BCE. But most biblical scholars will place its textualization no earlier than the late eighth century BCE. An eclectic, interdisciplinary approach will look at the material culture identifiable to the late eighth century in the northern Kingdom as well as relevant epigraphic finds, such as the Samaria Ostraca. The anthropological concept of reciprocity can help to illustrate the possible interpretations of this portrayal of exchange on a social and economic perspective. Together the usage of these types of sources will seek to demonstrate that 1 and 2 Kings (along with much of the DtrH) derives from a pre-exilic royal court with significant redactions during later periods.

By placing these narratives within a restrictive social setting, one must admit to the biases and agenda that served the Judaeen monarchy. Successive ideological reworkings of the text during exilic or post-exilic periods further complicate the questions over historical accuracy. In this sense, some of the “minimalist” research raises a pertinent corrective in identifying differences between biblical Israel of the scribal tradition, particularly

⁴¹ For an analysis on Hayden White's approach to Israelite historiography, see Hans Barstad, “The History of Ancient Israel: What Directions Should We Take?” in *Understanding the History of Israel*, ed. Hugh G.M. Williamson (2007), 25–48.

in the mindset of later communities, and the actual historical Israel of time and space. This study hopes to recognize all of these complications in historical study and the biblical text. In summary, the biblical text is useful as a historical source, but it requires a degree of critical interpretation, just like any purported historical evidence, whether epigraphy or archaeology. None of these sources can be assumed to purely represent “objective fact.”

But just as this project avoids uncritical positivistic acceptance, it equally eschews mechanical rejection of anything historical within the biblical narratives. The ensuing chapters will demonstrate a level of congruence between the biblical narratives with comparative Near Eastern epigraphic texts. These extra-biblical texts confirm the historicity of many of the economic actors for both Israel (Omri, Hezekiah) and her neighbors (Hiram, Ben-Hadad, Omri, Mesha, Neco, Merodach-Baladan). Many of the narrative settings match known historical circumstances such as Phoenician participation in long-distance maritime trade. The Neo-Assyrian tribute lists substantiate the massive commodities delivered to Mesopotamia via one-way transfer. Epigraphic remains also attest to some of the key events (siege of Samaria, wars between Israel and Aram-Damascus). Comparative texts in the Northern Levant, Egypt and Mesopotamia all show a temple economy reasonably consistent with the fiscal role of the Jerusalem temple as portrayed in the texts. Though the precise chronology is in dispute, material culture reveals impressive public structures that will attest to some degree of state formation in Israel and Judah during the first half of the Iron Age II period. Overall, Levantine archaeology and Assyriology will provide a multidisciplinary level of control in looking at the legitimacy of the historical portrait in 1 and 2 Kings. Consequently, this study understands ancient Israel as more than merely an ideological concept that unified a group during late Persian or even Hellenistic times. In line with the stated sources, the evidence will support ancient Israel as a historical reality, whose own textual accounts have historical authenticity.

In addition, many of the specific characterizations of the economic exchange do not have any identifiable ideological intent. Unlike other ancient records like Aristotle's *Politics*, economic discourse did not serve as a primary objective of the DtrH. For the most part, the specific nature of economic exchange remains in the background, neutral to the agenda of the authors and subsequent redactors. Because such exchange mechanisms often have little bearing on the religious motivations, one has good reason to accept its legitimacy as an accurate reflection of the economic

structures. The 2 Kings 4:1–7 example of the widow's sale of oil is sensible only within an unstated economic context that exists independent of the compiler's agenda. Even though the passage falls into the ahistorical genre of folktale, one can deduce that the economic mechanics presumed within the narrative were somewhat normative to the compilers, otherwise, they would have provided some explanatory glosses. In light of the absence of such commentary, one can expect that the command "Go sell the oil" was perfectly understandable to the pre-exilic audience. In this sense, the portrayals of exchange can adequately reflect the contextual social structures.⁴²

I intend to demonstrate that this usage of the economic anthropological categories of Karl Polanyi can serve as a contribution to issues of biblical text and history, and inspire more social-scientific approaches to Israel's past. Among the benefits of the recent advances in scholarship regarding Levantine history and the Bible, historical enterprises may no longer limit themselves to political histories, which emphasize public events, royal men, monumental architectural remains and select biblical texts. But instead, economic anthropology can help phrase historical issues in a broader, more inclusive frame for ancient Israel. Indeed, such a reading was the original intent of von Ranke's concept of "*zeigen, wie es eigentlich gewesen.*" von Ranke centered his own historical research on the state, but he proclaimed that the retrieval of these political histories was not the goal of historiography. Rather, he envisioned that political events ultimately witnesses to a wider understanding of the people and culture.⁴³ This study aligns with these broader historical concerns in regards to the economic structures of the biblical texts. Within the context of an economic history, the social scientific approaches allow for new and innovative readings of text, and can contribute to a richer and broader perspective on the exchange transactions. The impact is particularly meaningful for the readership existing in a modern economic world, with industrialization,

⁴² Marc Brettler, *The Creation of History in Ancient Israel* (London: Routledge, 1995), 91–111.

⁴³ Concerning his wider historical concerns, von Ranke wrote, "An original genius, which has its own life, fulfils conditions more or less peculiar to itself and creates a circle of effective activity for itself. It is the task of history to observe this life, which cannot be characterized through only one idea or one word. The spirit that manifests itself in the world cannot be circumscribed by a concept." Robert M. Burns and Hugh Rayment-Pickard, *Philosophies of History: From Enlightenment to Postmodernity* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000), 94.

wide-scale global trade, high specialization and most importantly, a degree of economic freedom and choice, the cornerstone of Western economic theory. The social scientific lens forces the reader to more deliberately consider issues of agrarianism, local economies, the burden of forced tribute, and other characteristics akin to ancient Israel. Furthermore, social scientific paradigms can contextualize this data in order to formulate conclusions regarding the economic nature of the exchange. This project applies social scientific theory, specifically economic anthropology to further illuminate historical interpretation of such data. The results are socially wide in that the portrayals of economic exchange will reflect a multiplicity of actors, and not just the elite polity leaders.

Finally, I would like to note that the fruits of this study do not necessarily depend on any *a priori* acceptance or rejection of any particular viewpoint of the historicity of the DtrH. Although I refer to chronological periods of textual transmission and archaeology, these references primarily aim to demonstrate the viability of Polanyian categories in analysis of ancient Near Eastern economies, whether under the aegis of Assyrian, Babylonian or Persian hegemony. The focus of this monograph remains on the philological study on the *portrayals* of economic exchange. In doing so, I hope to clarify the social implications of the text on its own terms. In fact, because of the vantage point of specifically pinpointing the portrayals of exchange, this study naturally creates an opportunity to provide a new vantage point to the bifurcating debates of historical inquiry of Iron Age Israel. The main query attends to the different types of economic exchange in the text, and how these transactions contribute to the narrative and paint a social picture of the world, whether that world is pre-exilic Judeans, Babylonian or Yehud.

1.4. *The Economies of Ancient Israel: A Survey of Research*

Biblical scholars have dealt with issues related to ancient economies through a wide variety of categories: philological, anthropological, social scientific, theological, most often, an amalgam of all the above methods. Because any attempt to cite all literature relative to economics is unavoidably overwhelming, a few select examples should suffice to give a rough overview over the present state of scholarship. With its explicit social concerns, prophetic literature most readily lends itself to such study on economic systems. For example, one only needs to consider the vast amount

of research focused on the social setting of the eighth century prophets.⁴⁴ Scholars have long recognized the impact of economic matters in the genre of biblical law.⁴⁵ Wisdom literature has also received much attention in terms of research on economics. Proverbs has the most secondary literature, though other scholars have looked at Qoheleth.⁴⁶ More recently, scholars consider the economic concerns in non-biblical Second Temple texts.⁴⁷ Other research takes a more thematic approach, such as the multitude of studies regarding the fiscal function of the Jerusalem temple.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Marvin Chaney, "Bitter Bounty: The Dynamics of Political Economy Critiqued by the Eighth-Century Prophets," in *Reformed Faith and Economics*, ed. R.L. Stivers (Lanham: University Press of America, 1989), 15–30; Izabela Jaruzelska, *Amos and the Officialdom in the Kingdom of Israel* (Poznań: Poznańska Drukarnia Naukowa, 1998); Philip J. King, "The Eighth, the Greatest of Centuries?," *JBL* 108 (1989): 3–15; Bernhard Lang, "Prophetie und Ökonomie im Alten Israel," in "Vor Gott Sind Alle Gleich": *Soziale Ungleichheit Und Die Religionen*, eds. Günter Kehr and Hubert Cancik (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1983), 53–73. The numerous liberation readings also devote much space to economic matters. For example, consider Norman K. Gottwald and Richard Horsley, *The Bible and Liberation* (New York: Orbis, 1993).

⁴⁵ David L. Baker, *Tight Fists or Open Hands: Wealth and Poverty in Old Testament Law* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009); Todd G. Buchholz, "Biblical Laws and the Economic Growth of Israel," *Journal of Law and Religion* 6 (1988): 389–427; W. Eugene Claburn, "The Fiscal Basis of Josiah's Reforms," *JBL* 92 (1973): 11–22; Jeffries M. Hamilton, *Social Justice and Deuteronomy: The Case of Deuteronomy 15* (SBLDS 136, Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1992); Walter J. Houston, "'You Shall Open Your Hand to Your Needy Brother': Ideology and Moral Formation in Deut. 15:1–18," in *The Bible in Ethics: The Second Sheffield Colloquium*, eds. John W. Rogerson, Margaret Davies, and M. Daniel Carroll (JSOTSS 207, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995), 296–314; A. Kuschke, "Arm und Reich im Alten Testament mit Besonderer Berücksichtigung der Nachexilischen Zeit," *ZAW* 57 (1939): 31–57; Norbert Lohfink, "Poverty in the Laws of the Ancient Near East and of the Bible," *TS* 52 (1991): 34–50; Lohfink, "Gottes Reich und die Wirtschaft in der Bibel," *IKaZ* 15 (1986): 153–176.

⁴⁶ Yong Sik Cho, "Concepts of Wealth in the Book of Proverbs" (Ph.D. Diss., Hebrew University, 2008); William Domeris, *Touching the Heart of God: The Social Construction of Poverty among Biblical Peasants* (New York: T & T Clark, 2007); Victor A. Hurowitz, "Two Terms for Wealth in Proverbs VIII in Light of Akkadian," *VT* 50 (2000): 252–257; James L. Kugel, "Qohelet and Money," *CBQ* 51 (1989): 32–49; Bruce V. Malchow, "Social Justice in the Wisdom Literature," *BTB* 12 (1982): 120–124; Timothy J. Sandoval, *The Discourse of Wealth and Poverty in the Book of Proverbs* (BINS 77, Leiden: Brill, 2006); Choon Leong Seow, "The Socioeconomic Context Of 'The Preacher's' Hermeneutic," *PSB* 17 (1996): 168–195; Harold Washington, *Wealth and Poverty in the Instruction of Amenemope and the Hebrew Prophets* (SBLDS 142, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994); R.N. Whybray, *Wealth and Poverty in the Book of Proverbs* (JSOTSS 99, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990).

⁴⁷ Claudia Camp, "Who Has Been Tested by Gold and Found Perfect? Ben Sira's Discourse on Riches and Poverty," *Henoch* 23 (2001): 153–174; Matthew J. Goff, *The Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom of 4QInstruction* (STDJ 50, Leiden: Brill, 2003); Catherine Murphy, *Wealth in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Qumran Community* (STDJ 40, Leiden: Brill, 2002); G. Ernest Wright, "The Discourse of Riches and Poverty in Sirach," in *SBL Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1998), 559–578.

⁴⁸ Peter R. Bedford, "The Economic Role of the Jerusalem Temple in Achaemenid Judah: Comparative Perspectives," in *Shai Le-Sara Japhet: Studies in the Bible, Its Exegesis and Its*

Many more studies deal with ancient Israel's economics at least peripherally, such as the numerous Hebrew Bible studies focused on liberation hermeneutics.⁴⁹

Each of these studies look at some aspect of the economy in ideological terms, yet none of these studies make serious attempts to analyze and dissect the ancient structures of exchange presumed through the biblical text. Similarly, most histories of Israel rarely state any theoretical foundation to their economic assumptions despite the enormous influence that financial matters had on the unfolding of history. This remains true for the books with maximalist approaches to biblical historiography as well as the more moderate and skeptical views. These works freely use terms such as "surplus," "profit," "market" and "investment," all which signal an underlying assumption of a primarily market-driven, and potentially anachronistic view of Israelite society.⁵⁰ These methodological assumptions must be made more explicit, especially in wake of the recent challenges to Israelite historiography and the sophistication now required to cover this period. At the very least, closer attention to the intricacies of the economic framework can nuance such viewpoints.

More likely, a critical examination of economic structures would undercut many of the social scientific presuppositions of these works. For example, an outgrowth of both scholarly writings and popular literature examine biblical views of poverty. Whereas poverty serves as a crucial theme in biblical texts, the social structure undergirding the economy defines the more precise nature of such poverty. Specifically, the existence and description of poverty depends on the nature of the greater economic system, whether capitalist, community, subsistence or anything else. Theological and historical works would both benefit from an explicit awareness of the economic values within the ancient Israelite society. With the growing realization of the importance of social structures surrounding the development of biblical text, it is surprising to observe the

Language, ed. Moshe Bar-Asher, et al. (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2007), 3–20; Martin Goodman, "The Pilgrimage Economy of Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period," in *Jerusalem: Its Sanctity and Centrality to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, ed. Lee I. Levine (New York: Continuum, 1999), 69–76; Marty Stevens, *Temples, Tithes and Taxes: The Temple and the Economic Life of Ancient Israel* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2006); Joel Weinberg, *The Citizen-Temple Community* (JSOTSS 151, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992).

⁴⁹ For recent bibliography, see Alejandro F. Botto and Pablo R. Andiónach, *The Bible and the Hermeneutics of Liberation* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009).

⁵⁰ One notable exception is Mario Liverani's recent volume, which adheres to a Marxist appraisal of ancient economies; Mario Liverani, *Israel's History and the History of Israel* (London: Equinox, 2006).

dearth of scholarship not just on exchange, but on ancient Israelite economic systems in general.

Interestingly, the two periods that chronologically surround ancient Israelite history have relatively strong development of economic analysis in the ancient Near East. The Late Bronze Age (1550–1200 BCE) material culture contains an impressively large amount of textual data to study economic systems. Archaeology has recovered significant archives from Alalakh, Amarna, Emar, Nuzi and Ugarit during this Late Bronze Age period, and the majority of these documents carry explicit economic content, outlining trade, inventory, gifts and receipts of goods. The evidence is particularly extensive for Egypt, with its iconographic and inscriptional evidence though most of it focuses on the later Eighteenth Dynasty (c. 1360–1330 BCE).⁵¹ Other archaeological evidence identifies settlement shifts and population densities as well as the presence of Egyptian items.⁵² Two shipwrecks off the Turkey coast provide important data on both seafaring and cargoes. All of this data help ancient Near Eastern scholars to reconstruct the economic world of the Late Bronze Age.⁵³

Similarly, the rise of Hellenism and the enormous cultural interest in the Greco-Roman world has helped to develop the understanding of Classical economic history. In fact, many prominent theoretical approaches to economies of antiquities developed with Classical Greece in mind, during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, cumulating with Moses

⁵¹ Barry Kemp, *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization* (New York: Routledge, 2005); David Warburton, *State and Economy in Ancient Egypt: Fiscal Vocabulary of the New Kingdom* (OBO 151, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1997); Warburton, *Macroeconomics from the Beginning: The General Theory, Ancient Markets, and the Rate of Interest* (Neuchâtel: Recherches et Publications, 2003).

⁵² Rivka Gonen, "The Late Bronze Age," in *The Archaeology of Ancient Israel*, ed. Amnon Ben-Tor (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 211–257.

⁵³ For general works on Bronze Age economic structures, see Timothy K. Earle, *Bronze Age Economics: The Beginnings of Political Economies* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 2002); Andre Gunder Frank et al., "Bronze Age World Systems Cycles (and Comments and Reply)," *Current Anthropology* 34 (1993): 383–425. Recently, several have studied the economic structures of the Late Bronze Age Levant, notably, Carol Bell, "The Influence of Economic Factors on Settlement Continuity across the LBA/Iron Age Transition on the Northern Levantine Littoral" (Ph.D. diss., University College London, 2005); Lisa Marsio Cole, "The Economic Organization of Southern Canaan in the Late Bronze Age: A Synthesis of the Textual and Archaeological Data" (Ph.D. diss., The University of Arizona, 2004); Kevin M. McGeough, *Exchange Relationships at Ugarit* (Leuven: Peeters, 2007); Christopher Mountfort Monroe, *Scales of Fate: Trade, Tradition, and the Transformation in the Eastern Mediterranean, ca. 1350–1175 BCE.* (AOAT 357, Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2009); J. David Schloen, *The House of the Father as Fact and Symbol: Patrimonialism in Ugarit and the Ancient Near East* (SAHL 2, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2001).

Finley's seminal volume, *The Ancient Economy* (1985), which emphasized the agrarian nature of ancient economies.⁵⁴ The Classical period has extant archival documents, particularly in Ptolemaic Egypt (though still small compared to the Bronze Age) and abundant studies in material culture. Aside from the numerous textual documents, this period notably produced treatises on economic thought such as Aristotle's *Politics* and Xenophon's *Economics*, something completely lacking for the biblical world. This period continues to be particularly fruitful in generating discussion on theoretical models of ancient economies.⁵⁵

But unlike the Late Bronze Age and the Classical period, Israelite history lacks the same degree of disinterested economic evidence. With the transition to Aramaic as a lingua-franca and the concomitant replacement of durable clay archives with ephemeral papyri, many of the economic documents have perished over the course of time. The most important extant archives consist of ostraca with larger collections found at Samaria and Arad. Although this study will examine these archives in greater detail in Chapter Four, even these collections have limited data, as they represent immaterial quantities compared with the total economic activity. Both the Samaria and Arad archives barely number one hundred, a paltry figure compared with the many thousands of extant economic texts of the Bronze Age. The seals and sealings of the Southern Levant provide welcome, though limited evidence as well. Overall, the comparative lack of epigraphic evidence has certainly been a factor in the lack of study on the nature of Iron Age Levantine exchange.

With such a lack of understanding in ancient Israelite economics, several recognized the enormity of Moshe Elat's Hebrew-language monograph, *Economic Relations in the Lands of the Bible (1000–539 BCE)*.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Finley's volume continues to spawn much discussion in economics of the Classical period, *The Ancient Economy*, 2nd ed. (London: Hogarth, 1985). No less than four major universities held colloquia at the 25th anniversary of the first edition of *The Ancient Economy*: Cambridge, Delphi, Oxford and Stanford. John K. Davies, "Hellenistic Economies in the Post-Finley Era," in *Hellenistic Economies*, eds. Zofia H. Archibald, John Davies, Vincent Gabrielsen and G.J. Oliver (London: Routledge, 2001), 25. Recently the major tome of three distinguished Stanford Classicists proves to continue to spark discussion over the nature of these economies; Walter Scheidel, Ian Morris, and Richard Saller, *The Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

⁵⁵ In particular, see Walter Scheidel and Sitta von Reden, *The Ancient Economy* (New York: Routledge, 2002); Joseph Gilbert Manning and Ian Morris, *The Ancient Economy: Evidence and Models* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005); Scheidel, Morris, and Saller, *The Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World*.

⁵⁶ Moshe Elat, *Economic Relations in the Land of the Bible (1000–539 B.C.E.)* (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1977). Also see reviews by Matitiah Tsevat, review of Moshe Elat, *Economic*

Despite its title, Elat mainly focuses on the exchange relationships within the Neo-Assyrian empire based on tribute lists. With a lack of other textual evidence, Elat utilizes these lists as primary sources for reconstructing Southern Levantine exchange. His book neatly divides into two sections. First, he looks at the various commodities for transfer in light of their availability throughout the Near Eastern empire. He divides into five chapters: silver/gold, non-precious metals, timber, horses and textiles. Elat summarizes the many references to these commodities, as well as their economic role in among the various vassals in the western periphery of the Neo-Assyrian Empire. Though seemingly tedious, these chapters are much more beneficial as they reflect the nature of the sources. In the second section, Elat then tries to reconstruct the exchange networks of the different polities within the Neo-Assyrian empire, committing chapters on Arabia, Egypt, Phoenicia and then finally a lengthy chapter on Judah-Israel.

Although many of these Neo-Assyrian tribute lists were published pre-World War II, biblical scholars have rarely utilized these sources in reconstructing the social settings. Elat himself sees trade in a limited function compared to mere subsistence agriculture, yet presumes a very market-driven mechanism. For the most part, the central governments took part in trade whenever conditions were favorable, that is, in controlling certain strategic points along caravans. Elat had a sophisticated view of the ancient Near East, though unfortunately, he had an uncritical view of the historicity of biblical texts. Thus, one reviewer describes the chapter on Israel and Judah as “First in length, it is last in pith.”⁵⁷ This was most evident in his understanding of late tenth century trade between Solomon and surrounding polities, in which Elat draws freely from the biblical narrative without much discussion over the archaeological evidence.⁵⁸ Regardless, this monograph was unique in direction and impressive in scope. Unfortunately, despite the exhortations from reviewers, this book

Relations in the Land of the Bible (1000–539 B.C.E.), JBL 98 (1979): 415–416; Michael Heltzer, review of Moshe Elat, *Economic Relations in the Land of the Bible (1000–539 B.C.E.)*, BASOR 230 (1978): 72–73; Moshe Elat, “The Monarchy and the Development of Trade in Ancient Israel,” in *State and Temple Economy in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Edward Lipiński (Leuven: Peeters, 1979), 527–546.

⁵⁷ Tsevat, “Review Of *Economic Relations in the Land of the Bible (1000–539 B.C.E.)* By Moshe Elat,” 416.

⁵⁸ For example, consider the trade with Sheba against the archaeological evidence, which does little to substantiate such a booming tenth century trade with the Arabian Peninsula.

never was translated into English, and therefore, remains largely ignored by Western scholarship.

In the 1980s, Morris Silver took on the question on Israelite economies with a much more significant response.⁵⁹ His book, *Prophets and Markets* (1983), represents the first English-language work to explicitly grapple with evidence for better characterizing the economic structure of ancient Israel. Like Elat, Silver espouses a market-oriented economy. But unlike Elat, Silver argues much more explicitly against any type of subsistence economy and instead carries the idea of supply-and-demand to every aspect of Israelite society. A careful reading of his work as well as his complementary articles reveals some major issues. His analysis belies his professional background as a monetary economist and not a biblical scholar. Consequently, he treats the ancient Israel economy like a modern system, which leads to two immediate difficulties. First, Silver has little sensitivity to the specific cultural values that regulated such exchange structures particularly as they might contrast to modern Western markets. Second, Silver does not acknowledge the paucity of data for antiquity compared to today. In a self-proclaimed attack against the Polanyian substativism, Silver sees relative stability between structures of the ancient Near East and structures of the post-Industrial Revolution. In the meantime, Silver seems unconcerned with many fruitful sources of ancient Israelite economic history, such as settlement patterns and pottery distribution. Despite these problems, Silver's work has been valuable in generating important dialogue on this topic.⁶⁰

More promisingly, some recent studies in Levantine archaeology provide data and analysis to the questions of economic anthropology. The material culture of Iron Age II paints a picture of thriving exchange

⁵⁹ Morris Silver, *Prophets and Markets: The Political Economy of Ancient Israel* (Boston: Kluwer-Nijhoff Pub, 1983); Silver, *Economic Structures of Antiquity* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1995); Silver, *Economic Structures of the Ancient Near East* (Totowa, N.J.: Barnes and Noble Books, 1986). Independent of Morris, C.H.J. de Geus argued for a private land economy in the early Iron Age. C.H.J. de Geus, "Agrarian Communities in Biblical Times: 12th to 10th Centuries B.C.E.," in *Rural Communities, Second Part = Receuils Jean Bodin IV* (Paris: Dessain et Tolra, 1983), 203–237.

⁶⁰ Shortly after Silver's publications, Barry Gordon addresses the biblical approaches to the problem of scarcity, very much in the spirit of Silver's formalist interpretation of ancient Israel. Gordon outlines the real problem of scarcity and looks at faith and wisdom as the biblically mandated solutions; Barry Gordon, *The Economic Problem in Biblical and Patristic Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 1989). Recently, Hayah Katz advocates for a strongly market economy in ancient Israel; Hayah Katz, 'a Land of Grain and Wine . . . A Land of Olive Oil and Honey': *The Economy of the Kingdom of Judah* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi Press, 2008).

networks throughout the Southern Levant both locally and long-distance. One of the primary controversies in interpreting the material culture involves the extent of the Assyrian Empire's influence on the seventh century economy. In light of the enormity of the Assyrian empire in both spatial size and military might, many scholars interpret the economic activities according to a centralized polity. Most of the region saw abrupt settlement shifts attributable to the Assyrian policy of mass deportations. For example, during the seventh century, the Judean Desert witnessed an unparalleled wave of settlement activity despite its inhospitable climate. Similar activity occurred in the Negev with the emergence of several new sites. Some scholars suggest that Assyrians dictated increase in scale and specialization of the economies. The enormous industrial olive oil facility at Tel Mique (Ekron) during the seventh century represents such centralization by an overarching polity.⁶¹

Other studies interpret the flurry of Levantine economic activity apart from the direct influence of the Assyrians. Lawrence Stager's port-power theory has been particularly influential.⁶² Under port-power theory, Stager argues that the backbone of trade networks were the "local village clusters" in the highlands, which center on an established regional market, such as Shechem or Jerusalem. These regional markets connect with intermediaries in the interior coastal plain, which in turn, operate in cooperation with a major seaport. Stager's port-power theory suggests that these ties were not under coercive political nor military control, but rather established through symbiotic economic relations. Consequently, each import-export merchant (rather than a centralized political entity) carried real power. Although Stager applies port-power theory to the Bronze Age, two of his students utilize these concepts to the Iron Age IIB Southern Levant.

⁶¹ Israel Finkelstein and L. Singer-Avitz, "Ashdod Revisited," *TA* 28 (2001): 231–259; Seymour Gitin, "The Neo-Assyrian Empire and Its Western Periphery: The Levant, with a Focus on Philistine Ekron," in *Assyria 1995: Proceedings of the 10th Anniversary Symposium of the Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, Helsinki, September 7–11, 1995*, eds. Simo Parpola and Robert M. Whiting (Helsinki: The Project, 1997), 77–103; Gitin, "Tel Mique-Ekron in the 7th Century B.C.E.: The Impact of Economic Innovation and Foreign Cultural Influences on a Neo-Assyrian Vassal City-State," in *Recent Excavations in Israel: A View to the West: Reports on Kabri, Nami, Mique-Ekron, Dor, and Ashkelon*, ed. S. Gitin (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt, 1995), 61–79. Cf. Nadav Na'aman, "Ekron under the Assyrian and Egyptian Empires," *BASOR* 332 (2003): 81–91.

⁶² Lawrence E. Stager, "Port Power in the Early and Middle Bronze Age: The Organization of Maritime Trade and Hinterland Production," in *Studies in the Archaeology of Israel and Neighboring Lands in Memory of Douglas L. Esse*, ed. Samuel R. Wolff (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2001), 625–638.

Through analysis of the distribution of storage jars, Carolina Aznar, defends the viability of this model to Iron Age II.⁶³ Her study suggests a flourishing exchange during most periods of the Israelite monarchy. Daniel Master's study of Ashkelon pottery highlights greater connections to Phoenicia and not Assyria, thus arguing the minimal influence of the great Neo-Assyrian empire to the flourishing economy of Ashkelon.⁶⁴ Avraham Faust and Ehud Weiss agree with the port-power theory as a starting point, but they develop the model with greater specificity to the seventh century.⁶⁵ They contend that Judah divided into zones of production according to commodity value. The maritime reach of the Phoenicians allowed and promoted efficiency zones into both Judah and Philistia, functionally creating a single economic entity. All of these port-power applications focus on the economic motivations from local groups more than any distant coercive political pressure from the Assyrians.

The study of the Iron Age South Arabian incense trade also adds an important dimension to the discussion.⁶⁶ Traditionally, scholarship observes that this long-distance trade suggests large empires controlling the channels of wealth and exploiting the nomadic tribes of the Negev. Recently, scholarship investigates new interpretations on this caravan trade. Piotr Bienkowski and Evelyn Van der Steen suggest the development of trade outposts not as a result of Neo-Assyrian command, but rather from the provision of a *pax Assyriaca*.⁶⁷ Bienkowski specifically frames these relations as non-redistributive, but much more reciprocal in nature.⁶⁸ Despite the smaller size and power of the pastoral groups of the Wadi Arabah, Bienkowski suggests that their adaptability to the arid

⁶³ Carolina Aznar, "Exchange Networks in the Southern Levant During the Iron Age II: A Study of Pottery Origins and Distribution" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2005).

⁶⁴ Daniel M. Master, "Trade and Politics: Ashkelon's Balancing Act in the Seventh Century B.C.E.," *BASOR* 330 (2003): 47–64.

⁶⁵ Avraham Faust, Ehud Weiss, "Judah, Philistia, and the Mediterranean World: Reconstructing the Economic System of the Seventh Century B.C.E.," *BASOR* 338 (2005): 71–92.

⁶⁶ Israel Finkelstein, "Horvat Qitmit and the Southern Trade in the Late Iron Age II," *ZDPV* 108 (1992): 156–170.

⁶⁷ Piotr Bienkowski, Eveline van der Steen, "Tribes, Trade, and Towns: A New Framework for the Late Iron Age in Southern Jordan and the Negev," *BASOR* 323 (2001): 21–47. The variants within the Edomite pottery in light of anthropological theories on social awareness further confirm the localized nature of the exchange, Yifat Thareani, "The Spirit of Clay: 'Edomite Pottery' and Social Awareness in the Late Iron Age," *BASOR* 359 (2010): 35–55.

⁶⁸ Piotr Bienkowski, "Landscape, Identity and Reciprocal Relations: The Wadi Arabah as Relationship and Discourse," in "Up to the Gates of Ekron," 407–422.

regions equalized any power disparity with the greater Assyrian empire. In studying Late Iron Age pottery typologies, Juan Manuel Tebes determines that the local styles of different Negevite ware indicate that the local pastoral groups fueled such trade.⁶⁹ But contrary to the interpretations of any reciprocal activity in the Negev trade, Holladay determines that the nature of exchange reflected a monetary economy. He emphasizes the central roles of tolls from the South Arabian trade based on evidence from sites such as Tel Masos.⁷⁰ Holladay concludes that Iron Age Judah was not a redistributive economy, but rather one that was adapted for individualistic exploitation of their lands.⁷¹

Metrological studies can provide additional perspectives to this discussion over the nature of Israel's ancient economy. On the domestic exchange level, Hayah Katz argues for the centrality of supply-and-demand markets in Iron IIB Israel and Judah.⁷² She makes her assertions based on the abundance of weights founds within domestic contexts, assuming that individual households participated in exchange at city gates. In the only full-scale study on Judaeon weight systems, Raz Kletter concludes that the isolation and immaterial nature of Judah's economy rendered them insignificant on the greater scale.⁷³ Still, Kletter observed significant Judahite weights outside of the boundaries of Judah. These weights are mostly interpreted as functioning in trade and their presence in Northern Israel, the Transjordan and Philistia represent the potential reach of the Judahite trade network.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Juan Manuel Tebes, "Assyrian, Judaeans, Pastoral Groups, and the Trade Patterns in the Late Iron Age Negev," *History Compass* (2007): 95–117; Tebes, "Iron Age 'Negevite' Pottery: A Reassessment," *Antiquo Oriente* 4 (2006): 619–631.

⁷⁰ John S. Holladay, Jr., "Hezekiah's Tribute, Long-Distance Trade and the Wealth of Nations ca. 1000–600 BC," in *Confronting the Past: Archaeological and Historical Essays on Ancient Israel in Honor of William G. Dever*, eds. Seymour Gitin, J. Edward Wright and J.P. Dessel (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 309–331.

⁷¹ Holladay, "The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah: Political and Economic Centralization in the Iron IIA–B (ca. 1000–750 BCE)," in *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land*, ed. Thomas E. Levy (New York: Facts on File, 1995), 368–398.

⁷² Hayah Katz, "Commerical Activity in the Kingdoms of Judah and Israel," *TA* 31 (2004): 268–277.

⁷³ Raz Kletter, *Economic keystones: The Weight System of the Kingdom of Judah* (JSOTSS 276, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998). Though Kletter's view is under scrutiny: Ephraim Stern, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible Volume 2: The Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian Periods (732–322 B.C.E.)* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 197–198.

⁷⁴ Israel Eph'al and J. Naveh, "The Jar of the Gate," *BASOR* 289 (1993): 59–65; Ely Levine, "The Weight of the Evidence and the Evidence of the Weights: An Examination of the Interrelations of Economies in the Iron Age Levant" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2008);

Judging from this brief survey, biblical scholarship can greatly benefit from a symbiotic relationship with Levantine archaeology in pursuing these issues concerning economic systems. But by itself, material culture cannot necessarily determine the nature of exchange. Although archaeology can detect such specificity such as a wine shipment moving from the Shephelah to Avaris, such movement may have occurred by any one of Polanyi's three exchange mechanisms. But still the pursuit of Israelite economic history must utilize material culture. Chapter Four, in particular, will examine archaeology in composing a picture of developing redistribution in the Southern Levant.

1.5. *Conclusions*

I believe that the present state of scholarship provides an ideal opportunity to examine these complex matters. The vast cultural influence of the Bible goes beyond philological approaches and into many related disciplines such as theology, ethics and philosophy. All of these fields would benefit from a more sophisticated investigation and description of economic conditions presumed within the biblical text. In addition, Levantine archaeology continues to provide data for such analysis, while actively seeking to define the parameters of economic transactions on both local and international scales. Recently, economic anthropology and Assyriological study have matured from the substantivist-formalist debate, recognizing the artificiality of such bifurcation. They largely acknowledge the presence of both socially conditioned forces as well as supply-and-demand at work in antiquity. Yet throughout this time, biblical studies to its discredit, has remained insular to these advances. The time is not only ripe, but perhaps long overdue to examine portrayals of exchange in the Bible.

This project seeks to provide a sound exegetical approach to the economics of ancient Israel. The following chapters will actively engage in both critical study of biblical texts and extra-biblical evidence as it illuminates economic structures. Although not explicitly ideological, nor theological in orientation, this project hopes to add other dimensions to such important questions and issues. Most significantly, the judicious application of economic anthropological theory to this philological study can hopefully issue challenge to today's scholar, who unwittingly rely upon

Yigael Yadin, "Ancient Judaeon Weights and the Date of the Samaria Ostraca," in *Studies in the Bible*, ed. Chaim Rabin (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1961), 9–25.

anachronistic assumptions about Southern Levantine exchange from many millennia past. One must properly understand theory in order to set the questions and assess the potential answers. For this reason, before directly examining the biblical texts, it is vital to consider the context and intellectual history behind economic anthropology.

CHAPTER TWO

ECONOMIC ANTHROPOLOGY

Before examining the biblical texts through the lens of Karl Polanyi's paradigm of exchange, a review of the intellectual history of economic anthropology before the publication of *The Great Transformation* (1944) will help contextualize his methodological framework.¹ Specifically, an awareness of two aspects of his theoretical development can facilitate its application to ancient Israel. First, Polanyi represents a seminal point in the midst of a long intellectual dialogue about political economy that goes back to Adam Smith. For over two centuries, this debate has been so spirited and intertwined that each scholar stands entangled with all of his or her opponents, supporters and revisionists. Simply stated, one can hardly understand Weber, without also understanding Ricardo, Mill, Marx and so forth. Second, many of the key figures throughout the development of economic theory, including Polanyi, did not develop their theories with any intent to explain the economies of antiquity. For Polanyi, the political climate of the Eastern European fascism motivated him to explore the connections between political systems and their economic activities. His earlier theories had a clear agenda in that he wanted to understand the trajectory of history that led to the present state of Hungary and the rest of Europe. Polanyi sought to apply his theories to the ancient world as a mere validation for the universality of his model. A more thorough review of the development of economic anthropology can highlight both of these aspects, and ultimately help to nuance the application of Polanyi's paradigm to ancient Israel.

Understanding the intellectual history will also help to evoke a consciousness of a heuristic model, in that Polanyi's paradigm only serves to illuminate a particular culture. As with all social scientific applications to biblical studies, the model provides a framework, with an assumption that other cultures may indeed offer insight to the biblical era. But these social scientific approaches still remain models and nothing more. They function as abstract constructs, which allow scholars to contextualize

¹ Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*.

interpretations. With the paucity of data from antiquity, scholars cannot subject these models to the rigorous empirical testing as modern economic theory requires. Consequently, the use of Polanyi's paradigm can serve as a methodological control, but without any intention to developing a singular consensus application for ancient economies. In order to utilize Polanyi's paradigm of exchange, this chapter examines this model in the context of the intellectual history of economic anthropology.

2.1. *Theories of Political Economy*

2.1.a. *Classical Political Economy*

A look at the intellectual history behind the development of Polanyi's substantivist theory must begin with a brief review of classical political economy, which symbolically begins with the publication of Adam Smith's *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* in 1776.² This treatise promotes a central theme that a free market can self-regulate by making sound decisions on allocation of production, consumption and distribution based on collective supply-and-demand. According to Smith, these forces make a much greater contribution to civilized society than any political institution. Because such a free market effectively determines distribution through profit maximization, Smith saw that individual self-interests lead to the common good. Such a position was counterintuitive in eighteenth century England, which considered private gain as antisocial by nature. To contest such sentiment, Smith famously argued, "It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from regard to their own interest."³ By pursuing private interests, each of these craftsmen harmonizes their individual

² The actual birth of political economy is often attributed to Cantillon, Quesnay or Turgot, though none of these authors had the magnitude of Smith's treatise; Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (New York: Modern Library, 1937). The neglect of economic studies by biblical scholars is especially ironic when one reads the text and subtext of Smith's hugely influential work and its profoundly religious overtones. The title, "Wealth of Nations," likely comes from the Isa 61:6; 66:12. The concept of the "Invisible Hand" fits closely with the idea of a deity. Smith's own religious views are unknown, though he likely had a Protestant upbringing; see Peter Minowitz, *Profits, Priests and Princes: Adam Smith's Emancipation of Economics from Politics and Religion* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993); Jacob Viner, "Adam Smith and Laissez Faire," in *The Long View and the Short: Studies in Economic Theory and Policy* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1958), 213–245.

³ Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, I, 82.

desires to a common benefit. This intrinsic quality of free economy to self-regulate is so astonishingly efficient and hidden, that Smith famously described an “invisible hand,” guiding the economic decision-making for the collective benefit.⁴

In recognizing the benefits of such individual desires, Smith described a primary distinction of classical political economy: the division of economy from the political sphere. For Smith, nonpolitical life needs to organize and sustain itself independently of political decision-making. Thus economic laws must restrain the politicians, whom Smith disparagingly regarded as “crafty.”⁵ In turn, these politicians need to restrict themselves to caretaker roles that preserve access to economic freedoms, particularly maintenance of property rights, national defense and certain public works. But Smith wanted to privatize even these common projects whenever possible. For example, Smith advocated for toll fares to fund public highways and bridges. Left to themselves, the laws of supply-and-demand naturally bring self-regulation to an economy with access and information, ultimately working for the common good.

Scholars quickly realized that such growth could not grow unchecked. Demographic issues confronted the optimism of the *Wealth of Nations*, beginning with Thomas Malthus’ theory of population growth and its dependence on a limited food supply.⁶ David Ricardo’s theory of rent elaborates on the theoretical foundation of Malthusian population control through his influential “corn model.” Ricardo argued that economic growth inevitably sputters at some point due to the fixed quantity of natural resources.⁷ Specifically, when an agricultural society expands, the real rents on the prime land increase in proportion to the addition of lower quality land to meet production demand. With higher real rents, profits from wheat decline. Ricardo’s theory of rent intends to show that the landlord’s gain is counterproductive to capitalist interests to the point of equilibrium, when the incremental increase of rent is greater than the price of corn and production can no longer expand. In more general terms, when the quantity of a production factor (labor) increases, while

⁴ Interestingly, Smith only uses the emblematic term “invisible hand,” only once in the entire treatise; Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, IV, 477.

⁵ Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, IV, 435.

⁶ Thomas Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (London: J. Johnson, 1798).

⁷ David Ricardo, *On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* (London: John Murray, 1817).

the other factors remain fixed (land), marginal productivity declines.⁸ Whereas Ricardo admittedly assumed a fixed wage for his models, more recent economists have formulated a Ricardian growth model with variable-wage assumptions.⁹ Within such a model, the wage rate increases until it equals the natural rate, that is, when the marginal cost of production equals the required wage labor for such production.

Aside from the theory of rent, Ricardo formulated the Law of Comparative Costs. Using the simplistic example of a two-nation (England and Portugal), two-commodity economy (cloth and wine), Ricardo demonstrated that marginal advantages in production (rather than absolute advantages) provide an incentive for the countries to trade. Although seemingly obvious to today's economist, one must remember that Ricardo was the first to advocate for a theory of international trade against a theory of intra-national trade based on relative immobility of capital between polities. This was a crucial point in that absolute advantage has limits, whereas marginal advantage is ubiquitous within all macroeconomic structures.¹⁰

Ricardo's theories of comparative costs convincingly demonstrates the benefits of international divisions of production, and his successor, John Stuart Mill, outlined the mechanism of price determination of such a system.¹¹ Specifically, Mill determined formulas to quantify the relative

⁸ For more detailed exposition on Ricardo's corn model, see Mark Blaug, *Economic Theory in Retrospect* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 30–34; Takuo Dome, *History of Economic Theory* (Brookfield, Vt.: Edward Elgar, 1994), 85–106.

⁹ John Hicks and Samuel Hollander, "Mr. Ricardo and the Moderns," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 91 (1977): 351–369; Carlo Casarosa, "The New View of the Ricardian Theory of Distribution and Economic Growth," in *Advances in Economic Theory*, ed. M. Baranzini (Oxford: Blackwell, 1982), 45–58; Casarosa, "A New Formulation of the Ricardian System," *Oxford Economic Papers* 30 (1978): 38–63.

¹⁰ Egyptologist David Warburton draws on the issue of tin-importation in Anatolia to affirm Ricardo's "Theory of Comparative Advantage," Warburton, *State and Economy in Ancient Egypt*, 104. But Warburton extrapolates too much from the limited data of Anatolia. Although they began to specialize, this does not definitely point to significant market presence. Anatolia clearly had the resources to produce both silver and tin, during the second millennium BCE, tin production ceased and Anatolian polities began to import it. The Hittites and Hurrians chose to divert their energy to concentrate on silver production, where they held comparative advantage. Similar examples can arise from almost every periods of the Near East, such as the specialization of olive oil in seventh century Ekron or the shipping industry of the Phoenician city-states. Therefore, although Ricardo first elucidated this concept into a workable economic model, the intrinsic understanding of comparative advantage dates from antiquity.

¹¹ John Stuart Mill, *Principles of Political Economy with Some of Their Application to Social Philosophy* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1848); This theory of rent openly disclosed a conflict between the landlord and the producer. Such a basis would later develop into a Marxist perspective on economies.

prices of Ricardo's two-commodity world. This provided a computational model to determine the rate of benefit for countries in free trade. In such computations, Mill recognized certain situations of "imperfect specialization" in which one country does not necessarily benefit, but continues to trade based on mutual demand. In quantifying the price, Mill proved the possibility of one of the two countries not specializing in production, or imperfect specialization.

Continued modifications to classical political economy spawned multiple theories from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries. In the Western world, the most lasting and influential of these theories are Neo-Classical and Keynesian economics. Neo-Classicism, associated with Carl Menger and William Stanley Jevons, advances the primacy of marginality as a powerful conceptual tool alongside the classical measures of growth, distribution and labor theory of value.¹² Most importantly, this period saw the development of the Law of Diminishing Marginal Utility. With marginality at the forefront, Neo-Classicism adds elements of human logic into the sterile parameters of material production. Keynesian economics also modified classical political economy by confronting the inevitable shortcomings of the market economy.¹³ With the empirical evidence of the Great Depression, the Keynesian critique argues that inability to make good decisions on production can lead to a systemic failure of the market system to assure adequate purchasing power. These failures necessitate government intervention designed to assure stable processes of production and employment.¹⁴

Although classical economic models have significantly developed since Adam Smith, they essentially maintain the same Hobbesian assumptions, that is, people make rational economic decisions based on profit models. Even with the revisions of Neo-Classicism and Keynesian economics, the core of *homo economicus* remained intact: (1) people act selfishly; (2) people inherently exchange for maximizing; (3) universal scarcities

¹² William Stanley Jevons, *The Theory of Political Economy* (New York: MacMillan and Co, 1871), Carl Menger, *Principles of Economics* (Auburn: Ludwig von Mises, 1871, 1976).

¹³ John M. Keynes actually used ancient Egypt as an illustration for his notion of multiplier; John M. Keynes, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money*. (London: Macmillan, 1936). Recently, Warburton tries to apply Keynesian economics to New Kingdom structures. Unfortunately, most economists do not consider Keynesian theory as valid for even the Depression era, much less any economy of antiquity; Warburton, *Macroecconomics from the Beginning*.

¹⁴ For a succinct review of the precepts of Neo-Classicism and Keynesian economics, see James A. Caporaso, David P. Levine, *Theories of Political Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 79–125.

of needs / wants drive economic decisions; (4) when people are rational (have knowledge), they maximize and strategize; and (5) the individual serves as the unit of analysis. These economic assumptions remain so fundamentally intrinsic to Western thought that most historical treatments of antiquity make these assumptions, yet they rarely state them explicitly. In fact, the systematic defense of an Adam Smith economy in the ancient Near East under the rubric of the “modernist” or “formalist” only began to appear in response to competing economic theories. Although these formalist scholars vary in their use of corpora and time periods, they all essentially assess the maximization of profits as a universal character of society. Many of these arguments base themselves on epigraphic evidence, assessing seemingly capitalistic activity such as interest-bearing loans, receipts and partnerships in ancient economics. Chapter Five will explore these issues in greater detail, but for now, one must understand that the extant economic texts are not completely revealing of the greater system. Both market-exchange and administered-exchange can produce similar corpora. As a result, the issue of proper evaluation of such evidence remains the primary challenge to the formalists.

Whereas classical political economy continues to dominate the Western constructs of social order, other trajectories from Adam Smith completely overturn his capitalist assumptions on economic life. Specifically, Karl Marx also recognized the separability of economics from political order, but he took the concept much farther, making economic activities the driving force behind societal progression.

2.1.b. *Karl Marx*

Although Karl Marx died during the nascent beginnings of Assyriology, his basic ideas on economy have been hugely influential in the field of ancient Near Eastern studies. Marx reacted ambivalently to classical political economy. He viewed capitalism as a decisive stage within a grand progression, but a stage with ideological limits, which prevents further advancement. Specifically, Marx saw a capitalist system as non-benevolent, even anarchic, as it inevitably leads to crises among producers. Marx interpreted a Darwinian struggle among capitalists in a drive to accumulate more and more surplus, until lesser capitalists struggle and even fade away. This distinction between the capitalists and the workers progressively becomes more pronounced and thereby creates distinct classes. This class consciousness inevitably leads to conflict as individuals commit themselves to pursue collective interests (*contra homo*

economicus) thereby catalyzing major societal changes via “class struggle.” In Marx’s grand scheme, the progression of human evolution consists of five major stages: primitive-communal, slave, feudal, capitalist and communist modes of production. Each mode distinguishes itself by the access to these means of production, and the transfer between stages arises from internal dynamics.¹⁵

This herein becomes the fundamental contribution of Marx to ancient Near Eastern economies, the emphasis on the relations of production. For antiquity, the ownership of land is the primary means to production, and thus, access to land defined class structures. But in most periods and regions of the ancient Near East, one cannot easily identify such distinct classes. One can also question the idea of a pervasive class consciousness among the exploited that propelled any major societal change. Historically, the ancient Near East (and Far East) went through vast periods of time without much progress along any grand dialectical continuum.

For these reasons, Marx and Engels modify their theoretical application to the Eastern world through their concept of the Asiatic Mode of Production.¹⁶ In order to explain the lack of dialectical progression in Oriental society, Marx and Engels drew on the works of British political economists such as John Stuart Mill.¹⁷ They characterized the Oriental world as despotic centralized states dominating over small peasant communities. Such a centralized state prevents individual property holdings thereby negating any accumulation of capital and concomitant progression along any Marxist continuum. The central government coordinates large-scale irrigation projects and collects rents from the villages, leaving autarkic villages with little possibility for trade and surplus. Economic autonomy makes these societies particularly vulnerable to stagnation. Whereas European modes of production clearly followed a deliberate progression, Eastern countries remained sluggish for long periods of time. Because Marx and Engels

¹⁵ For a review of the Marxist critique on classical political economy, see Caporaso, *Theories of Political Economy*, 55–78; Prabhat Patnaik, “Notes on Marx’s Critique of Classical Political Economy,” *Social Scientist* 30 (2002): 59–67.

¹⁶ For treatments on the development of the Asiatic Mode of Production within the Marxian corpus, see Stephen Dunn, *The Fall and Rise of the Asiatic Mode of Production* (London: Routledge, 1982); Lawrence Krader, *The Asiatic Mode of Production* (Van Gorcum, 1975); Brendan O’Leary, *The Asiatic Mode of Production* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989).

¹⁷ Brendan O’Leary explains the connections between British political economy and the Asiatic Mode in *The Asiatic Mode of Production: Oriental Despotism, Historical Materialism and Indian History* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 73.

primarily theorized on European economies, they left the concept of the Asiatic Mode largely undeveloped.

After the death of Marx, the discussions over the Asiatic Mode of Production reached major impasse among both theorists and political figures. The political transitions within China and Japan further complicated the development of the Asiatic Mode. Ironically, while Chinese and Japanese scholars began to seriously discuss the viability of the Asiatic Mode, Soviet scholars aggressively discredited it.¹⁸ Sergei Dubrovskii saw feudalism, rather than any Asiatic Mode, as a more precise descriptor with the implicit hierarchy of suzerain and vassal.¹⁹ It may have had variations on medieval European feudalism, but it certainly was not distinguishable as a mode of production to itself.²⁰ Eastern European opponents turned to political arguments saying that the concept of an Asiatic Mode could undermine the Soviet policy.²¹ Specifically, Stalin wanted to control Chinese movements, and needed a theoretical policy that would not be geographically distinct, and would justify alliance between him and the Chinese Kuomintang. Others turned to ideological arguments, claiming that supporters of the Asiatic Mode distorted the writings of Marx and Engels.²² Marxist historian Leszek Kolalowski identified three particular contradictions between the Asiatic Mode and basic Marxist theory: (1) Marxism emphasizes production rather than geography; (2) Marxism highlights progress over stagnation; (3) Marxism sees this progress as universal and not limited to a Western phenomena.²³ The emphasis on the Asiatic mode of feudalism moved to an emphasis on slavery. In a 1933 lecture, V.V. Struve saw feudalism as a poor descriptor, and argued that most economies were driven by slave production.²⁴ Eventually, Stalin, himself, denounced the Asiatic Mode in the 1930s so that by 1938, he did not

¹⁸ Joshua Fogel, "The Debates over the Asiatic Mode of Production in Soviet Russia, China, and Japan," *American Historical Review* 93 (1988): 56–79.

¹⁹ Dunn, *The Fall and Rise of the Asiatic Mode of Production*, 60; Fogel, "The Debates over the Asiatic Mode of Production."

²⁰ This eventually viewpoint became quite influential particularly in studies of Ugaritic economies.

²¹ Dunn, *The Fall and Rise of the Asiatic Mode of Production*, 61, 75; Fogel, "The Debates over the Asiatic Mode of Production."

²² Dunn, *The Fall and Rise of the Asiatic Mode of Production*, 18–30.

²³ Leszek Kolalowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*, 3 vols., vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 350.

²⁴ Vasilii V. Struve, "The Problem of the Genesis, Development and Disintegration of the Slave Societies in the Ancient Orient," in *Ancient Mesopotamia: Socio-Economic History*, ed. Igor Diakonoff (Moscow: Nauka, 1969), 17–69.

recognize the existence of an Asiatic mode among the five standard modes, effectively silencing the discussion. This viewpoint remained dominant until the death of Stalin in 1953.

The succeeding years of de-Stalinization saw a revival of the concept of the Asiatic Mode of Production. For a brief time, it eventually evolved into a well-accepted theory during the 1960s largely as a result of Karl Wittfogel's *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* (1957).²⁵ Though Wittfogel originally served the German Communist party, after his move to the United States, he supported a vociferous anti-Marxist policy, criticizing both the theoretical underpinnings of the Asiatic mode, as well the totalitarianism of the Stalin regime.²⁶ Both the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China very much fell into such stagnation that inevitably resulted in absolute power over hydraulic resources. He hoped to find a valid analogy in ancient economies to theorize on the relationship between power and control of irrigation, drawing on evidence from Mesopotamia. Eventually, his theory fell out of favor due to the lack of Hegelian progression in Mesopotamian irrigation history, but Wittfogel at least rekindled the discussions of the Asiatic Mode in the ancient Near East, particularly with the "Leningrad School."²⁷

The "Leningrad School," associated with Igor M. Diakonoff, Muhammed Dandamaev, Michael Heltzer, and Western advocates in Mario Liverani, Carlos Zaccagnini and Roland Boer, created a hybrid version of the Asiatic Mode for application to the ancient Near East. These scholars espoused a "two-sector" model in that not all economic players were propertyless slaves, or feudal serfs. To a degree, Diakonoff aligned himself with Struuve in that he characterized the two-sector model as an early type of slave mode, contending for the presence of a substantial group of "free sector" outside of the official royal and temple state sector.²⁸ In more explicit

²⁵ Karl Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957).

²⁶ Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism*, 375–378.

²⁷ The actual pattern of irrigation control fluctuates quite severely, with peaks during the beginning of the Old Babylonian reign and again during the Sassanians from the third to seventh centuries CE; Robert McC. Adams, "Die Rolle des Bewässerungsbodenbaus bei der Entwicklung von Institutionen in der Altmesopotamischen Gesellschaft," in *Produktivkräfte und Gesellschaftsformationen in Vorkapitalistischer Zeit*, eds. J. Hermann and I. Sellnow (Berlin: Akademie, 1982), 119–140.

²⁸ Diakonoff was reacting to the feudalism models for ancient Near Eastern economic society. In line with Marxist grand historical progression, Diakonoff saw feudalism as a single stage in historical materialism. Igor Diakonoff, "The Structure of Near Eastern Society before the Middle of the Second Millennium B.C.," *Oikumene* 3 (1982): 7–100.

Marxian terms, the “non-free” sector did not own the means of production and essentially existed as a slave class, whereas the “free” sector owned some of the means of production and functioned as relatively independent proprietors working their own ancestral lands. Diakonoff argued from his philological understanding of the native terms for the two classes in Old Babylonian texts, as described in the ideological Code of Hammurapi: the “free” (*mar awilu*), and the “non-free” (*mar muškenu*). Various cuneiform administrative texts list the former term as using patronyms and extending from larger kin-based familial units, whereas the latter term is typically listed by profession and comes from smaller households without social nets, thereby requiring state protection. Diakonoff relied heavily on Middle Assyrian and Nuzi documents to describe the more specific structures of this free class whose land belonged to communal kin and not the state, though his interpretation has been heavily criticized.²⁹

Diakonoff’s student, Heltzer took much of the theoretical basis of the two-sector model and applied it directly to the Late Bronze Age Northern Levant.³⁰ Heltzer interpreted the Ugaritic textual data as including the distinct group of rural communities of the kingdom, the free “sons of Ugarit” (*bn ’ugrt*) and the non-free “royal servants” (*’bd mlk*). The limited nature of the king is further highlighted by texts of royal land purchase suggesting the restriction of absolute land seizure. Heltzer was one of the most prolific writers on Levantine economic systems and has brought attention to many of the crucial issues. For one, he was working against long held traditional understandings of ancient Near Eastern rulers as despotic in every aspect, a characteristic clearly now rejected. But his works have been attacked on both his arbitrary selectivity of evidence, and lack of philological sophistication.³¹ Essentially, the terminology in the Ugaritic

²⁹ Leemans protests the identification of a significant extended family and rural community unit in Old Babylonia. W.F. Leemans, “The Family in the Economic Life of the Old Babylonian Period,” *Oikumene* 5 (1986): 15–22; Leemans, “Trouve-t-on des ‘Communautés Rurales’ dans l’Ancienne Mésopotamie?,” in *Les Communautés Rurales II: Antiquité* (Paris: Dessain et Tolra, 1983), 43–106. J.N. Postgate makes the same objection on the basis of Middle Assyrian texts; J.N. Postgate, “*Ilku* and Land Tenure in the Middle Assyrian Kingdom—A Second Attempt,” in *Societies and Languages of the Ancient Near East: Studies in Honour of I.M. Diakonoff*, ed. M.A. Dandamaev (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1982), 304–313.

³⁰ Michael Heltzer, *The Internal Organization of the Kingdom of Ugarit* (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 1982), Heltzer, *Goods, Prices and the Organization of Trade in Ugarit* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1975).

³¹ Michael Astour, review of Michael Heltzer, *The Rural Community in Ancient Ugarit*, *JNES* 39 (1980): 163–167; Dennis Pardee, “Ugaritic Studies at the End of the Twentieth Century,” *BASOR* 320 (2000): 49–86; Péter Vargyas, “Stratification Sociale À Ugarit,” in *Society*

administrative texts does not necessarily translate into rigid social classes as Heltzer interprets.³² Regarding land grants, although members of the royal family may purchase land, the language of these contracts is almost verbatim in any other type of transaction. David Schloen notes that in the entire corpus of texts from Ugarit, the king, himself, never makes a single land purchase.³³ Rather than such a two-class sector, Schloen sees that most of the households had worked for both their own kinship land, while also involved with labor devoted to the royal sector.³⁴

Some Western scholars have adopted basic precepts of the Leningrad school. Although Diakonoff never explicitly used the term "Asiatic Mode of Production" likely due to the political climate of Stalin and the promotion of Marxist orthodoxy, Zaccagnini specifically identifies the two-sector model of antiquity with the Asiatic Mode.³⁵ Liverani also utilizes the two-sector model, attempting to incorporate hard data from the abundant economic texts of Ugarit in regards to royal farms.³⁶ He determines that the epigraphic evidence shows the king exploiting the peripheral agricultural communities, wreaking havoc in countryside production. Such unchecked redistribution eventually made the Levantine coast vulnerable to the Sea Peoples' attack, which signaled the end of the Bronze Age. For a long time, the two-sector model was a chief paradigm for the Late Bronze Age

and Economy in the Eastern Mediterranean (c. 1500–1000 B.C.), eds. Michael Heltzer and Edward Lipiński (Leuven: Peeters, 1988), 111–123.

³² For example, Heltzer supports his two-sector model with a Hittite royal edict (RS 17.238) promises to extradite any Ugarit peoples among the *'apiru*. Heltzer suggests that the juxtaposed terms "son of a servant of the king of Ugarit," (IR₃ LUGAL kur u₂-ga-ri-it) and "son of Ugarit," (DUMU kur u₂-ga-ri-it) suggest native terminology for the two-sectors. In contrast, Schloen argues that the Hittite edict has little need to mention two classes, but rather acts to include everyone in Ugarit regardless of class. This wider understanding is more sensible in light of other written evidence of these phrases; see Schloen, *The House of the Father*, 221–222.

³³ Schloen further argues that even if such a text existed, it would not necessarily reflect the limited royal power on the land, but rather a compensatory act of the king to the previous holders of that land. Of course, such an assessment depends on the language and form of any such hypothetical document, though the biblical texts themselves would suggest limited royal power in regards to royal lands; Schloen, *House of the Father*, 230.

³⁴ Schloen, *House of the Father*, 224.

³⁵ Carlos Zaccagnini, "Asiatic Mode of Production and Ancient Near East: Towards a Discussion," in *Production and Consumption in the Ancient Near East*, ed. C. Zaccagnini (Budapest: University of Budapest, 1989), 1–126, though Dunn refutes this in *The Fall and Rise of the Asiatic Mode of Production*, 35–36.

³⁶ Mario Liverani, "Economy of Ugaritic Royal Farms," in *Production and Consumption in the Ancient Near East*, ed. C. Zaccagnini (Budapest: University of Budapest, 1989), 127–168.

Levant, largely out of default.³⁷ Boer sees the Asiatic Mode as useful not for its explanation of stagnation, but rather for its attention to the deeply complex and integrated understanding of economy.³⁸ Boer highlights the multiple nodal centers of economy and declares that the sacred aspects of these centers allows for the activities of allocation and extraction.

Currently, most applications of Marxist economic theory arise from Immanuel Wallerstein, who suggests a world-system, in which resources from the periphery move to the centralized state.³⁹ Wallerstein argues that technological advance coupled with capitalism make supply-and-demand powerful forces to economic life. As these forces grow, they produce a division of labor that allows for continued exploitation, analogous to Marx's dichotomy of exploited proletariat and the capitalist bourgeoisie. Market exchange, more than ideology or coercion, has the ability to maintain such exploitation. Wallerstein emphasizes that this social dichotomy extends beyond local political borders, thus the model advocates a world-system. Wallerstein explains:

Note the hyphen in world-systems and its two subcategories, world-economies and world-empires. Putting the hyphen was intended to underline that we are talking not about systems, economies, empires *of the* (whole) world, but about systems, economies, empires *that are* a world (but

³⁷ For much of the 1970s and 1980s, the two-sector model was the only alternative to the theoretical approach of feudalism to the Late Bronze Age Levant. During the 1950s and 1960s, several scholars saw medieval feudalism as a sensible Weberian ideal type for Ugaritic society. These scholars quickly became enamored with this superimposition of a medieval feudal model over Late Bronze Age Ugarit. See John Gray, "Feudalism in Ugarit and Early Israel," *ZAW* 64 (1952): 49–55; Anson Rainey, "The Social Stratification of Ugarit" (Ph.D. diss., Brandeis University, 1962). Cf. Albrecht Alt, *Die Landnahme der Israeliten in Palästina* (Leipzig: Werkgemeinschaft, 1925). The *maryannu* "charioteers" as Indo-European nobility seemed to provide a perfect analogy with European knights. These "charioteers" stood at the top of most profession lists, and tended to receive the greatest payments in distribution. The language of many of the vassal treaties had certain correlation to the contracts of feudal lords. Both medieval Europe and the Bronze Age appear to have a rather large class of propertyless workers, or "serfs." The *KTU* 4 corpus often names people by skilled profession, somewhat akin to the guilds of feudalism. But this dependence on a Weberian feudal ideal type was problematic. First, the vassals of Ugarit did not have the freedom of medieval Europe. Second, the textual evidence of the Late Bronze Age does not unambiguously support the presence of devoted guilds. Third, the only true connection between the *maryannu* and the medieval knights were the horses. Thus, the Marxist "two-sector" model of the Leningrad School quickly replaced the ideal of feudalism.

³⁸ Roland Boer, "The Sacred Economy of Ancient 'Israel'," *SJOT* 21 (2007): 29–48.

³⁹ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1974).

quite possibly, and indeed usually, not encompassing the entire globe) [italics, parenthetical expressions original].⁴⁰

Technology catalyzes this world-system. By the late fifteenth century, Europeans mastered the technology to ship bulk commodities over long distances. Once this technology arrives, it transforms the social structure of the world, allowing for core-periphery exploitation without explicit political control. The technology of this world-system could then maintain such an exploitative relationship for extended periods.

Although Wallerstein initially denied that such a “world-system” applies to the pre-capitalist periods, this system has developed into an extremely popular paradigm for ancient Near Eastern economies for its explicit integration of multiple aspects (political, economic, social, ideological) in defining the complexity of ancient societies.⁴¹ Phil Kohl challenges the exclusivity of the world system to modern Europe, and applies this system to the Bronze Age periods with the major modification of multiple cores and a pre-capitalist setting.⁴² Other ancient Near Eastern scholars quickly followed and suggested a world-system paradigm with the prime modification of its ability to maintain itself in the absence of capitalist systems.⁴³ Wallerstein eventually recognized the flexibility of his own model and its potential as an analytical model for pre-capitalist periods.⁴⁴

But historical evidence suggests that the world systems paradigm is either inapplicable to the ancient Near East, or it requires so much modification that it loses any merit as a theoretical framework. Gil Stein has

⁴⁰ Wallerstein, *World-System Analysis: An Introduction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 16–17.

⁴¹ Gil J. Stein, “World System Theory and Alternative Modes of Interaction in the Archaeology of Culture Contact,” in *Studies in Culture Contact: Interaction, Cultural Change, and Archaeological Investigations, Occasional Paper No. 25*, ed. J.G. Cusick (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University, 1998), 224.

⁴² Phil Kohl, “The Ancient Economy, Transferable Technologies and the Bronze Age World-System: A View from the Northeastern Frontier of the Ancient Near East,” in *Centre and Periphery in the Ancient World*, eds. M. Rowlands et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 13–24. Jane Schneider made the first attempt to situate world systems to an earlier period; Schneider, “Was There a Pre-Capitalist World-System?” *Peasant Studies* 6 (1977): 20–29.

⁴³ Guillermo Algaze, *The Uruk World System: The Dynamics of Expansion of Early Mesopotamian Civilizations* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2005), Andre Gunder Frank et al., “Bronze Age World Systems Cycles (and Comments and Reply),” *Current Anthropology* 34 (1993): 383–429.

⁴⁴ “There was in this way of formulating the unit of analysis a further link to older ideas.” Wallerstein ties his model to Polanyian categories, recognizing earlier historical contexts for a world system; Wallerstein, *World-System Analysis: An Introduction*, 17.

outlined some serious difficulties with the application of Wallerstein to these ancient Near Eastern economies.⁴⁵ Stein argues that vast distances have a leveling affect, thereby preventing any single polity to economically exploit vast amounts of territory. Stein looks to the metal-rich Anatolian periphery as evidence against such exploitation, as they exported highly-advanced finished goods, rather than pure materials as Wallerstein theorized. The only core-peripheral exploitation was military in nature, in which the periphery would send goods but only through the motivation of military coercion and not market developments, thereby refuting the very heart of Wallerstein's model. Schloen argues that those who revise the model also strip it of any analytical usefulness.⁴⁶ Despite these criticisms, many world-systems apologists continue to advocate this paradigm.

In addition to theoretical explanations of ancient Near Eastern economies, Marxism has had a significant impact on economic topics within biblical studies in two other ways. First, Marxist theorists developed a conceptual framework on formation of the Israelite state through the peasant-revolt theory of George Mendenhall and Norman Gottwald.⁴⁷ This model explains the settlement of the Israelite nation as a group of oppressed peasants, banding together and forming an egalitarian polity in early Israel. Although both archaeologists and philologists have largely discredited such theories, the peasant-revolt theory provided an alternative to the maximalist interpretation of Israelite settlement in the wake of Kenyon's Jericho and other attacks on biblical historiography.⁴⁸ Most importantly, the peasant-revolt theory instigated the usage of social scientific theory in historical reconstructions. Such an interpretation underscores the socially distinct character of economic structures apart from the despotic rulers of the ancient Near East.

⁴⁵ Stein, "World System Theory," 220–255; Stein, *Rethinking World-Systems: Diasporas, Colonies, and Interaction in Uruk Mesopotamia* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1999).

⁴⁶ Schloen, *The House of the Father*, 85–89.

⁴⁷ Norman K. Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh: A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel, 1250–1050 B.C.E.* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1979); George E. Mendenhall, "The Hebrew Conquest of Palestine," *BA* 25 (1962): 66–87.

⁴⁸ For examples of criticism against the peasant revolt theory, see Anson Rainey, review of Norman Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh: A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel (1250–1050 B.C.E.)*, *JAOS* 107 (1987): 541–543; Lawrence Stager, "Forging an Identity: The Emergence of Ancient Israel," in *The Oxford History of the Biblical World*, ed. M.D. Coogan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 90–131.

Second, Marxist interpretation has found legitimacy among the crowded field of post-colonial hermeneutics.⁴⁹ The influential liberation theologians used material poverty and class conflict as a starting-point for expressing their theological agenda with the main difference of the salvific construct of liberation rather than class conflict in ultimately bringing social change—a radical modification from Marxist atheism! Positively, Marxist interpretation forces a view of theory that must explicitly grapple with economic issues though the focus of these studies tend to be more theological and ideological rather than historical. These Marxist hermeneutic studies can benefit greatly from a deliberate study of the economic structures presumed within the biblical texts.

2.1.C. *Max Weber*

Until recently, most scholars have dismissed any conceptual points of contact between Marx and Max Weber.⁵⁰ Marx centered his theories around exploitation and class consciousness, yet Weber never explicitly developed any such concept of exploitation. Marx built a fiercely anti-capitalist model, whereas Weber taught economics from the vantage point of a member of the German Historical School, accepting many of the rationalist positions of Neo-Classicism.⁵¹ But under a wider perspective, both attempted to deal with the seemingly obvious challenges to classical political economy. Whereas Marx finds a starting point in empathy for the oppressed, Weber's view of ancient economies embodies his holistic, anti-positivist account of society. Weber believed that analysis of societies must go beyond mere external signs and seek underlying paradigms and values that govern social behavior.

Rather than assuming the universalism of *homo economicus*, Weber identified formalist economic behavior as a limited ideal type (*Verstehendes*).⁵² Weber explicitly pointed out that such a concept of *homo economicus* was

⁴⁹ For a summary bibliography on Marxist hermeneutics, see Fernando F. Segovia, "Reading the Bible Ideologically: Socioeconomic Criticism," in *To Each Its Own Meaning*, eds. Steven L. McKenzie, Stephen R. Haynes (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999), 283–306.

⁵⁰ For recent studies on the relationship of Marx and Weber, see Erik Olin Wright, "The Shadow of Exploitation in Weber's Class Analysis," *American Sociological Review* 67 (2002): 832–853.

⁵¹ Richard Swedberg, "Max Weber as an Economist and as a Sociologist: Towards a Fuller Understanding of Weber's View of Economics," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 58 (1999): 561–582.

⁵² Swedberg, "Weber as an Economist," 564.

unique to Western peoples and their actions, but one cannot straitjacket such a presumption on every economy through time. Modern economic theory inevitably projects a particular setting, that is, perfect economic knowledge, perfect decision-making (economic rationality) and tireless devotion to self-gain. Weber argued that a rationalist ideal type does not account for the non-economic motivations of decision-makers. In reacting against such rationality, Weber declared, "Economics is not a science of nature and its qualities, but of people and their needs."⁵³ Whereas classical economics can have merit in certain settings, Weber acknowledged the presence of non-rational behavior in the greater economic structure, particularly in non-Western cultures.

The assumption of economic rationality as an ideal type allowed Weber to disregard *homo economicus* assumptions for the ancient Near East in favor of specific ideal types to describe the economic conditions. Most prominently, he argued that the concept of patrimonialism served as the most informative ideal type for the ancient Near East.⁵⁴ Essentially, the larger governing structures, such as the royal court and the temple, pattern themselves after family households. Patrimonialism was a much more accurate description of many governing systems of the ancient Near East, rather than a more rational impersonal bureaucracy. Patriarchy drove the governance of individual households, and planted the foundation for a rule by patrimonialism, the governance of a polity or chiefdom.⁵⁵

Several scholars apply this concept of patrimonialism to the Near East, and recent years have seen a major revival of Weber's patrimonialism on ancient economic systems. Schloen's work on the patrimonial structure of Late Bronze Age Ugarit provides an attractive option to the dominant two-sector model.⁵⁶ Schloen argues that despite all of its diversity in topography and cultural contacts, all Bronze Age systems display a uniformity that strongly aligns with a patrimonial model. The basic household model was adapted into larger social structures and became the dominant governing mechanism. The model also provides enough flexibility in its broad application without suffering from reductionism. This non-rational

⁵³ Max Weber, *The Agrarian Society of Ancient Civilizations*, trans. R.I. Frank (London: NLB Press, 1976), 32.

⁵⁴ Several have criticized Weber's association of patrimonialism with medieval European feudalism, though it is evident that Weber himself recognized this difference. See Schloen, *The House of the Father*, 52. A feudal vassal had the legal rights of a free man and was not a member of the feudal lord's household.

⁵⁵ Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005).

⁵⁶ Schloen, *The House of the Father*.

economic system was disrupted by the string of “world empires” beginning with the Neo-Assyrians, which began to create economic structure that included elements of rationality. Although critics have challenged the universality of patrimonialism as an ideal type during the Late Bronze Age, Schloen makes a convincing case of its presence on every level of ancient society.⁵⁷

This and other ideal types serve a distinct methodological function—they were somewhat artificially dichotomous, but they acknowledged the integrated nature of social understandings.⁵⁸ This recognition is the hallmark of Weber’s lasting influence on the humanities, and fundamentally in contention with classical political economy. The sterile theories of economic formalism leave little room for cultural and social influences on economic decisions. Behavioral decisions based on prestige and etiquette are not only impossible to quantify, they are often contrarian to maximizing behavior. Thus, studies of the ancient Near East require more holistic thinking and analysis beyond rational economics.

This anti-positivist attitude influenced Weber’s understanding of the ancient Israel through his work, *Ancient Judaism* and again in a chapter on Israel in *Agrarian Societies*.⁵⁹ For Weber, the law codes provide the most reliable sources for ancient Israelite society. These codes, specifically the Book of the Covenant and Deuteronomy, permit the scholar to move from the theoretical ideal type to see a glimpse of the historical Israel.⁶⁰ In studying this law, Weber deduced several characteristics of the Israelite economy. The laws assume a money economy based on regulations on loans and deposits. The biblical laws make no mention of any sort of collective ownership, rather property initially fell within the control of a family. Most importantly, the Israelite nation distinguishes itself from

⁵⁷ For criticism, see Daniel E. Fleming, “Schloen’s Patrimonial Pyramid: Explaining Bronze Age Society,” *BASOR* 328 (2002): 73–80; Christopher Mountfort Monroe, review of J. David Schloen, *The House of the Father as Fact and Symbol: Patrimonialism in Ugarit and the Ancient Near East*, *JAOS* 122 (2002): 904–907.

⁵⁸ In addition to patrimonialism, the “ancient city” is another Weberian ideal type placed on Mesopotamian society. For Weber, the Mesopotamian city was oppressively despotic compared the “ancient city” of classical Greece, which encouraged freedom and forms of democracy, deliberately providing legal status to its citizenry. This underlying value made the Mesopotamian “ancient city” a net consumer of goods, collecting in-kind payments from the periphery; see Max Weber, *The City: Non-Legitimate Domination*, trans. Claus Wittich, 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973); see critique by Marc van de Mieroop, *The Ancient Mesopotamian City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

⁵⁹ Weber, *The Agrarian Society of Ancient Civilizations*, 137; Max Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, trans. Hans H. Gerth and Don Martindale (New York: The Free Press, 1952), 32.

⁶⁰ Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 61–89.

neighboring cultures by their commitment to covenant in regulating their economic structure. Whereas many cultures displayed a relatively unified religious cult among the peoples, Israel's religion focuses on a conception of direct agreement between the people and the deity. YHWH is more than a mere witness to the covenant pledge, but rather a fully-involved participant. Consequently, the divine intimacy demands that the Israelite people abide by mechanisms to maintain a high egalitarian ethos within the economic structure. With the transformation from loose tribal structure to monarchy, the covenant continues to regulate the distributive process of ancient Israel. Through deep valleys and high plateaus, the topography of Israel makes despotic centralized control impossible. Thus, the concept of covenant regulates the distributive process of ancient Israel to maintain fairness and access. This egalitarian spirit contrasts with neighboring Mesopotamia, which went through periods of full-fledged despotic regimes.⁶¹

Both Marxism and Weber's anti-positivist school provided legitimate intellectual challenges to many of the formulations of classical political economy. But such challenges did not make much of a pervasive impact on ancient economic history by the time of Weber's death in 1920. In the Western world, the advocacy for free markets and fewer constraints was too strong of a force. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Mill's textbook was still standard in many British and American university economic departments. Only the devastation of World War I and its drawn out recovery could shatter the optimism of classical political economy as well as many of the social sciences. The ensuing decade would be formative for the development of the field, and consequently, to our own understanding of economic anthropology as it applies to the ancient Near East.

2.2. *The Pioneering Economic Anthropologists*

Despite alternative theoretical tracks from Marx and Weber, by the end of World War I, the precepts of classical political economy of *homo economicus* still drove most Western scholarship. Cultural considerations played little role, not only in understanding economic decisions, but in the entire humanities field. More significantly, ethnocentrism perme-

⁶¹ Unlike Marx, Weber had access to primary ancient Near Eastern sources. In making his assessment of Mesopotamia, Weber claims that 200,000 cuneiform documents had already been translated; Weber, *The Agrarian Society of Ancient Civilizations*, 103–104.

ated the social sciences. A 1930 synopsis of the burgeoning field of economic anthropology speculates on the acceptance of *homo economicus* as universally axiomatic:

Until recently most students believed that primitive men had no economic life worth studying. Economists were not interested in them: for were not these folk savages? They possessed only a small amount of material goods, had little private property, and often no money, tolerated no great amount of free enterprise, and did not produce for a market.⁶²

To many scholars of the time, it was inconceivable how such a primitive culture could offer anything of observable value to Western advanced societies.

Within this context, substantivist economic anthropology symbolically emerged with the studies of Bronislaw Malinowski. In an attempt to better contextualize his scholarship, he lived among a Melanesian tribe and learned their native languages.⁶³ Although Malinowski was trained in the theories of classical political economy, he quickly began to realize the shortcomings of these theories in his study of the Trobriand Islanders, particularly in regards to the exchange patterns in the *kula* ring. Malinowski outlined three major spheres of exchange: subsistence, prestige, *kula*. In the subsistence sphere, the islanders send yams to the village chief, who must allocate them for public feasting. The prestige sphere has different items for women and men. The women exchange non-commercial products made from banana leaves for occasions such as marriage and funerary arrangements. These banana leaves provide protective magic against sorcery as well as symbols of strength to the community. The male prestige sphere involves axe blades, clay pots, yams, tusks and canoes, and men exchange these items as dowry, compensation for murder and prizes. The *kula* ring includes armshells and necklaces around a seven hundred mile chain of islands. Alongside this ceremonial exchange, this trade system maintains a parallel secondary trade in utilitarian items (foodstuffs, raw materials, manufactures, etc.). Within the context of cultural immersion,

⁶² Maurice G. Smith, "Review of Primitive Economics of the New Zealand Maori by Raymond Firth," *American Anthropologist* 32 (1930): 548.

⁶³ This in itself was a huge turning point in anthropological research. Until Malinowski and Phil Boaz, most anthropologists spent an extremely limited amount of time in the field. Malinowski's immersion in the Micronesian culture begat high-quality field reports and detailed observations; Bronislaw Malinowski, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific; an Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea* (London: Routledge, 1932).

Malinowski quickly recognized Trobriand economic activity defying the construct of *homo economicus*.

Malinowski's observations of the Trobriand Island economy forced a new understanding of economic rules, governed by the a new set of economic assumptions, now playfully termed as *homo reciprocans*.⁶⁴ Consequently, Malinowski set up his own principles to articulate how classical political economy is not universal: (1) people are socially-motivated and inherently cooperative (2) people inherently change for the community; (3) in primitive (non-tainted) societies, needs and wants are largely met; (4) the Trobriand Islander is not out to maximize, but rather he follows a complex set of traditional forces: duties and obligations, beliefs and magic, social ambition and vanities; and (5) the larger family or tribe makes the primary economic decisions, and thus serves as the unit of analysis.

homo economicus

- (1) People act selfishly.
- (2) People inherently exchange for maximizing.
- (3) Universal scarcities of needs/wants drive economic decisions.
- (4) When people are rational (have knowledge), they maximize and strategize.
- (5) The individual serves as the unit of analysis.

homo reciprocans

- (1) People are socially-motivated and inherently cooperative.
- (2) People inherently exchange for the community.
- (3) Needs/wants are largely met.
- (4) People follow a complex set of traditional forces: duties and obligations, beliefs and magic, social ambition and vanities.
- (5) The larger family or tribe serves as the unit of analysis.

In other words, Malinowski determined that the Trobriand Islander acts in a way antithetical to *homo economicus*, directly confronting the ethnocentrism of rational economics. With the lingering effects of a post-enlightenment climate, Malinowski arose as a true forerunner of post-modernity. Unsurprisingly, the academic response was quite passionate. Many decried Malinowski as too relativistic and intellectually dishonest.

⁶⁴ The term *homo reciprocans* was coined by Samuel Bowles, "Social Organization and the Evolution of Norms," in *Sante Fe Institute Science Board Symposium* (1999).

But others followed Malinowski to solidify the cultural sensitivity to economic theory. Their overall goal was to develop a grand theory of economics that applied to both Western and non-Western systems. These anthropologists sought to sift through classic political economy and adjust it to a more universal paradigm. Many of the basic outlines of *homo economicus* were not completely discarded, but modified. Everyone had basic wants, but these wants were culturally-determined. For example, non-monetary economies did not value gold as highly as monetary economies.

Two scholars in particular made lasting contributions to economic anthropology, by simultaneously expanding and refuting Malinowski's observations. First, Malinowski's student, Raymond Firth, studied economic patterns of the Maori tribes of his native New Zealand.⁶⁵ Under Malinowski's direction, Firth recognized complexity in exchange as well as forces of prestige and honor triumphing supply-and-demand. Firth determined that Western people operate under Western economic law, while Maori people operate under Maori economic law. All cultures have powerful notions of needs and wants. But sometimes they want prestige more than commodities and thus act accordingly. In this way, Firth actually laid a foundation for later formalists by asserting supply-and-demand actually as universal, by commodifying prestige, like silver or grain.

Second, Marcel Mauss challenged Malinowski's notion of reciprocity.⁶⁶ Malinowski observed the Trobriand islander as a very independent actor within a greater structure. But Mauss emphasized the dominance of kinship relations, which in turn fuels relations and obligations within the group. Thus, a simple act of exchange serves as a complex expression of peoples, objects and their social relations with each other, thus they are fundamentally different from commodities. Gifts dominate the exchange patterns in Malinowski's Melanesia and Firth's New Zealand, while commodities dominate industrial societies. Gifts do not have utilitarian function as a commodity, but rather, they maintain and uproot social relations. Thus, any study of gift exchange must seek to understand not only the commodity, but the social network of the giver and receiver. Though later scholars understood the potential for both gifts and commodities to exist in a single society, Mauss openly dismissed the idea of

⁶⁵ Raymond Firth, *Primitive Economics of the New Zealand Maori* (London: George Routledge, 1929).

⁶⁶ Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans. Ian Cunnison (Glencoe: Free Press, 1954).

any disinterested trading within the *kula* ring.⁶⁷ It appears, however, that the traditional reciprocal exchange of the *kula* ring facilitated utilitarian market exchange.

Significantly, one must recognize the settings of these pioneering thoughts on economic anthropology. A disproportionate amount of these theories emerged from observations on the Trobriand Islanders of the *kula* ring, and the Maori tribes of New Zealand. Although ancient Near Eastern research sometimes quote from these anthropologists, one must remember the enormous differences between these island communities and the historical settings for the biblical texts. The Trobriand Islands exist in a very spacious, rain-driven agricultural community with its main commodities consisting of taro, bananas, fish and coconut. The *kula* ring would give large caravans to other neighboring communities that had relatively similar geo-political climates. With such homogeneity, one would not expect many of the marginal benefits to apply to inter-island trade of the *kula* ring. Thus, formalist economic theory asserts that rational people would not trade nor transport coconuts from hundreds of miles away when they were available from the local village. In this sense, the island community of Micronesia is a sharp contrast to the geological diversity of the Southern Levant in the Iron Age. If the homogenous Trobriand islanders still integrated utilitarian trade into their socially-embedded network, one must certainly anticipate a degree of utilitarian trade in the topographically diverse Southern Levant.

Malinowski revealed the shortcomings of the *homo economicus* model in a more forceful way than any previous scholarship. Both Marx and Weber derived their models from theoretical abstract formulations, later supported by evidence from other cultures. But the pioneering economic anthropologists tended to work in an opposite direction. They began with observations and descriptions of a living social system, both non-Western and pre-capitalist. Most of the Malinowski's work was devoted to mere description of this system, then later he made more holistic observations on these systems, later refined by others who also had first-hand testimony of these non-tainted systems.

⁶⁷ James Carrier, "Gifts, Commodities, and Social Relations: A Maussian View of Exchange," *Sociological Forum* 6 (1991): 119–136.

2.3. Karl Polanyi

2.3.a. *The Great Transformation*

Although the early economic anthropologists recognized tribal economic behavior as aberrant in regards to classical political economy, they did not have the theoretical foundations to articulate a clear counter to capitalist formulations. But over time, their observations reached Karl Polanyi, who frequently quoted from these anthropologists to provide an empirical basis for his brilliant synthesis and expression of the mechanisms of exchange. Ironically, Polanyi never intended to impact the field of economic anthropology to such an extent. By education and trade, he was a lawyer, journalist, and economic historian with the aspirations of influencing modern social policy in his native Hungary. The concepts of socially-embedded economies provided a powerful tool for analysis of periods like the Great Depression and fascism. As Polanyi developed his own universal theory of exchange, he began to look to the ancient Near East, and primarily Old Babylonia, in order to validate his paradigm. His appointment at Columbia University and subsequent collaboration with Leo Oppenheim helped to disseminate his theories to Near Eastern scholars, primarily Assyriologists.

In the hugely influential *The Great Transformation*, Polanyi explained the emergence of the market economy, which arrived in England at the beginning of the nineteenth century, then subsequently spread to the rest of the industrial world.⁶⁸ Polanyi described this “Great Transformation” as creating an economy disembedded from social relations. The industrial economy streamlined economic processes to the standard of money, and set distributive decisions in terms of supply-and-demand. Essentially, Polanyi saw the development of the “Great Transformation” as an entrance into an economic world negotiated by Adam Smith. But unlike Smith, Polanyi thought that such a transformation had disastrous consequences. By allowing unregulated markets, nineteenth century England removed “The protective covering of cultural institutions,” allowing the people to, “perish from the effects of social exposure.”⁶⁹ Furthermore, Polanyi invoked Malthus to assert that free markets can never sustain

⁶⁸ Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*.

⁶⁹ Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 72–73.

themselves as they deplete all resources.⁷⁰ After the movement to a more capitalist society, countermeasures emerged to regulate the extent by which distribution could follow supply-and-demand. These countermeasures worked in that they partially re-embedded the economic structures, typically through socialism or the welfare state. Thus, despite their vast ideological differences, Polanyi observed the intra-war political movements of fascism, socialism and the New Deal as all attempting to repair the failures of an unregulated economy.⁷¹

The main problem with an unregulated free market centered on the unmitigated confidence in the construct of *homo economicus*. Polanyi insisted that all previous economic systems did not rely on such a standard. Implicitly referring to Malinowski's research on the Trobriand Islanders, Polanyi famously wrote:

The outstanding discovery of recent historical and anthropological research is that man's economy, as a rule, is submerged in his social relationships. He does not act to safeguard his individual interest in the possession of material goods; he acts so as to safeguard his social standing, his social claims, his social assets.⁷²

Many pre-capitalist societies may have had markets, but supply-and-demand did not regulate them. Of course, money existed, but true monetary transactions occurred within a very limited segment of the society.⁷³ Allocation of resources, particularly land, depended on kinship ties and the community. Thus, distribution of goods and services did not rely on price-setting markets, but rather on the economically robust mechanisms of reciprocity and redistribution.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 76–77, for connection between Polanyi and Malthus, see Garreth Dale, *Karl Polanyi: The Limits of the Market* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), 52–58.

⁷¹ W.L. Goldfrank interprets the "Great Transformation" to refer not to the inception of market economies, but the inception of these 1930s regimes that attempted to recapture the control over the failures of Adam Smith *laissez-faire*; W.L. Goldfrank, "Facism and *The Great Transformation*," in *The Life and Work of Karl Polanyi*, ed. Kari Polanyi-Levitt (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1990), 87.

⁷² Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 46.

⁷³ Polanyi recognized that money itself is a socially ambiguous device. Many non-capitalist societies had special-purpose money, which only circulated within specific parts of a society and did not serve as a universal standard of value. See Michel Panoff, "Marcel Mauss's "The Gift" Revisited," *Man* 5 (1970): 66.

⁷⁴ Polanyi also had a fourth mechanism, "householding" that he outlined in *The Great Transformation* but never developed. This was production explicitly for one's own extended household in archaic states such as Dahomey in the eighteenth century. Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 53.

2.3.b. *Reciprocity*

In *The Great Transformation*, Polanyi adopted his view of reciprocity from Malinowski's research of *kula* ring exchange. The Trobriand islands maintain important symmetrical arrangements, which allow for individuals to exchange goods, not out of supply-and-demand, but rather to maintain social position within the larger group. Polanyi argued that a male head-of-household may send his finest crops to his sister's family without any immediate material reward as one would expect in a purely commercial transaction. But with such an act, the giver will increase in prestige, and his own family will materially benefit from the increased reputation. Eventually, the sister's family will compensate to maintain the symmetry. Further examination of the Micronesia society reveals that such symmetry is pervasive in other social spheres. A coastal village has an inland counterpart to enable both to take advantage of marginal utility. Individual participants of *kula* ring trade have distant partners on other islands to trade commodities under disjointed chronology, sometimes as long as years. Because of the social concern for maintaining symmetry, reciprocity serves as an extraordinary motivator and regulator of economic activity. In a direct attack against *homo economicus*, Polanyi proclaimed, "The economic system is, in effect, a mere function of social organization."⁷⁵ Whereas classical political economy separates the economic and political spheres, Polanyi amalgamated them back together. Polanyi even argued that the Trobriand Islander illustrates that reciprocity could manage such a complex exchange system much more efficiently than market forces.⁷⁶

Polanyi further articulated his mechanism of reciprocity in "The Economy as Instituted Process."⁷⁷ Here, Polanyi specifically ties reciprocal exchange as a reflection of a greater organized structure. In looking at non-capitalist societies, Polanyi concluded that these cohesive kinship groups, rather than aggregate individuals, serve as the fundamental core of the economic system. Such a system necessitates the mechanism of reciprocity as the dominant means of exchange with redistribution

⁷⁵ Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 49.

⁷⁶ "An intricate time-space-person system covering hundreds of miles and several decades, linking many hundreds of people in respect to thousands of strictly individual objects, is being handled here without any records of administration, but also without any motive of gain or truck," Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 50.

⁷⁷ Karl Polanyi, "The Economy as Instituted Process," in *Trade and Market in the Early Empires*, eds. Karl Polanyi, Conrad M. Arensberg and Harry W. Pearson (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957), 239–270.

and market exchange taking subordinate roles. Thus, reciprocity occurs through taking turns to circulate goods. Also, reciprocity may occur via set equivalencies, though this does not necessarily change the social nature of the transaction. For these societies, all exchange mechanisms ultimately reflect the symmetrical nature of the social relationship of the economic players.⁷⁸

2.3.c. *Redistribution*

Whereas Polanyi emphasized the kinship structures of Micronesia to facilitate reciprocity, he connected the tribal chief to redistribution. But rather than symmetry, redistribution depends on centricity for its effectiveness. The tribal chief has the authority for collection and the capacity for storage. The communal center acts as the consistent locale for the actual redistribution of collected goods through festivals and ceremonial feasts. The tribal chief ultimately must maintain a division of labor, taxation for public works and defensive positions. Polanyi noted the extraordinary coordination required for the effectiveness of redistribution in Micronesia, particularly without the control of archives and written records. For example, a hunting tribe may go on an expedition, where productivity is extremely capricious, yet the centricity of the society through the tribal chief insures to socially protect those involved in the hunt, and to evenly compensate their families despite such irregularity in productivity.

Polanyi associated redistribution as a dominant exchange mechanism for the centralized polities of the ancient Near East, particularly Old Babylon under Hammurapi and New Kingdom Egypt. Here, the influence of Leo Oppenheim is unmistakable. Polanyi suggested that the ruling government could centralize on an enormous scale, then redistribute on a graded scale, using “sharply differentiated rations.”⁷⁹ An intricate system of storehouses allows for the collection of all types of peasant surplus,

⁷⁸ Marshall Sahlins divided reciprocity into three types: (1) general reciprocity highlights generosity and allowed for unmitigated payment of obligation; (2) balanced reciprocity stresses the egalitarian nature of trade and made means for timely payment; and (3) negative reciprocity emphasizes the selfish act of the giver in gaining power. Even more so than Polanyi, Sahlins brought attention to the social nature of reciprocity, though in doing so, he neglected the utilitarian aspects. This will have important repercussions on studies of reciprocity and the Bible. Marshall Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics* (Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1972). Later, Ekkehard Stegemann and Wolfgang Stegemann add a fourth category of “familial reciprocity.” Ekkehard and Wolfgang Stegemann, *The Jesus Movement: A Social History of the First Century* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 36.

⁷⁹ Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 54.

whether from breeders, hunters, bakers, brewers, potters, weavers, etc. These products move from smaller, peripheral storehouses, until they made their way to the larger storehouses, recorded under the royal archival system.

Within the edited volume, Oppenheim wrote his own article further articulating the intricacies of redistribution in the ancient Near East.⁸⁰ He argued that Mesopotamian economics centered on redistribution as the most fundamental concept based on the importance of cereal agriculture and its concomitant need for irrigation, urbanization and temple economics. These factors are all prevalent in the Mesopotamian records, and they provide a basis for overturning anachronistic economic thinking and replacing it with a highly complex, yet efficient model of redistribution. Oppenheim writes that the benefits of such a redistributive economy are obvious:

It fosters the accumulation of staples in the royal or divine household, compelling it to evolve bureaucratic methods to deal with those accumulations by stock-taking, budgeting, and assigning income and expenditures on a large scale. An elaborate system of equivalencies was developed to manage in an efficient way the array of different foodstuffs, materials for manufacturing, payments in kind to personnel, etc. These techniques—especially the use of equivalences—influenced all contacts of the redistributive system with the outside world and developed into an important means of exercising the political power which is inherent in such an economic situation.⁸¹

Oppenheim acknowledged the development of international trade sometimes under organized bureaucracy, and sometimes under individual desire. But he argued that such developments are atypical in the economic structure.

Polanyi noted the social consequences of redistribution in that not all societies may embrace egalitarian ethos in patterns of redistribution. Interestingly, Polanyi emphasized that those controlling the redistribution, whether aristocratic family, or a monarch, wanted to increase their political power, rather than material accumulation.⁸² Such an interpretation

⁸⁰ A. Leo Oppenheim, "A Bird's Eye View of Mesopotamian Economic History," in *Trade and Market in the Early Empires*, eds. Karl Polanyi, Conrad M. Arensberg and Harry W. Pearson (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1957), 27–37.

⁸¹ Oppenheim, "A Bird Eye's View," 31–32.

⁸² "Whether the redistributing is performed by an influential family or an outstanding individual, a ruling aristocracy or a group of bureaucrats, they will often attempt to increase their political power by the manner in which they redistribute the goods," Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 53.

allowed Polanyi to deal with the historical problem of people seemingly wanting more and more material goods within the cuneiform evidence. If Polanyi had acquiesced to the existence of material greed, then he would have undermined his own arguments against the universality of scarcity.

2.3.d. *Market Exchange*

Reciprocity and redistribution dominate Polanyi's understanding of the ancient Near East. Both mechanisms work in concert with the social matrices to maintain integration and regulate the greater economic structure. Similar to Malinowski, Polanyi recognized that reciprocal and redistributive mechanisms do not assume a simplistic economy. Rather, he noted the enormous complexity of the *kula* ring, and even questioned whether forces of supply-and-demand had the capacity to effectively regulate such intricate exchange.⁸³

The natural ensuing question concerns the place of market economy. Needing to reconcile his fierce anti-market polemic with some of the ancient textual evidence for long-distance trade, Polanyi categorized three main types of trade: gift trade, administered trade and market trade. Gift trade, as Polanyi described, seems indistinguishable from reciprocal exchange, particularly since he invoked the *kula* ring as an illustration of such trade.⁸⁴ Over vast distances, gift trade involves empires through presentation ceremonies, embassies and accompanying political dialogue with such trade. The gifts are elite goods and the frequency of exchange is quite limited, though it ultimately depends on sociological factors, such as the relative status of the two parties.

Government-controlled channels administered trade through formal treaty arrangements. Thus, heads-of-state specifically determined the crucial variables of the trading process: equivalency, ports, quality control, weighing, storage and safeguarding. In describing administered trade, Polanyi was careful not to mention any capitalist terminology, and if he did, he mentioned them in quotations (e.g. "rates," "payments").⁸⁵ Polanyi insisted that while polity leaders negotiate many of the variables, they do not negotiate over price in order to maintain the permanent trading bodies, whose treaties are protected by divine powers. To support the concept of administered trade, Polanyi cited from a variety of historical settings

⁸³ Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 50.

⁸⁴ Polanyi, "The Economy as Instituted Process," 262.

⁸⁵ Polanyi, "The Economy as Instituted Process," 262.

such as Aztec-Maya commerce in Mesoamerica, West Africa's Guinea coast in the eighteenth century and precolonial Asia along the Malabar coast of India. In the ancient Near East, Polanyi appealed to both independent city-states under the aegis of greater empires (Ugarit) and city-states that had their own advantage in naval superiority (Tyre).⁸⁶ In much of *The Great Transformation*, Polanyi defined market exchange quite rigidly in that all components of trade, including land, labor and currency were pure commodities without any barrier to a free flowing exchange.⁸⁷

Market trade is the most recent phenomenon and the creator of material wealth in the Western world. Supply-and-demand markets reduce economic acts from their social matrices and make exchange into an impersonal transaction. Unlike reciprocity and redistribution, market trade places a high value on the aggregate decision makers and the equivalencies that arise from these decisions. Market trade is unique in that it has the capacity to trade every single commodity, including the commodities involved in such trade (storage, transport, tolls, etc.). In the modern world, Polanyi pointed out that supply-and-demand were really separate forces that did not always end up in equilibrium as long as the market could accommodate them both. Here, Polanyi deliberately changes terminology from "equivalency" to "price" as the latter is now subject to massive fluctuation.

2.3.e. *The Problem of Terminology*

In keeping with Polanyi's economic anthropology, the ensuing chapters will use these rubrics to categorize biblical texts. At the same time, it is useful to consider two specific problems with Polanyi's terminology of reciprocity, redistribution and market exchange as applicable to these portrayals of economic exchange.

First, these terms carry a considerably wide semantic range within the field of economic anthropology. Sometimes, even Polanyi himself is inconsistent in usage of these terms. He has varying definitions of market exchange even within *The Great Transformation*. Garreth Dale describes one version of market exchange as identical to the capital markets of

⁸⁶ Karl Polanyi, "Ports of Trade in Early Societies," *The Journal of Economic History* 23 (1963), 38. For analysis, see Abraham Rotstein, "Karl Polanyi's Concept of Non-Market Trade," *The Journal of Economic History* 30 (1970): 117–126.

⁸⁷ Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 45, 72, 205; see Dale, *Karl Polanyi: The Limits of the Market*, 49.

Neo-Classicalism with commodification of all goods and services, leading to such economic characteristics as the creation of true money and credit.⁸⁸ The second version of market exchange relies on supply-and-demand, but only with inputs from governments and other agencies like the church, which owned the land. Thus, the major factor to production did not rely on the market. Dale observes that, “Polanyi rarely feels the need to clarify which of these uses he has in mind, although he is aware that different definition are in play.”⁸⁹ Because of these restrictions, the study will explain alternative usages of reciprocity, redistribution and market exchange when applicable. For example, Chapter Three introduces alternative forms of reciprocity, such as Marshall Sahlins’ idea of asymmetrical reciprocity, Yunxiang Yan’s version of “vertical reciprocity” or Charles Stanish’s view of competitive feasting, or “deferred reciprocity”.⁹⁰ The following chapters must define the meaning and elucidate these ambiguities in the terminology.

A second, related concern is that the terms have presuppositions that do not necessary reflect the specific conditions of the exchange. For example, Polanyi insisted that reciprocity is ultimately symmetrical, though this does not necessarily match the biblical portrayals of reciprocity such as the gift exchange with Sheba. As a correlary, Polanyian redistribution is asymmetrical and centric, but this does not adequately explains the feasting behind the Samaria Ostraca. Such an outcome naturally reflects the fact that Polanyi intended for his categories of exchange to help with modern economic policy, particularly for Eastern Europe and not as descriptors of ancient economies. As an anthropological theorist, Polanyi’s descriptions are often too overtly ideological to properly fit a specific historical context. This is most true with some of his descriptions on market exchange. In some instances, Polanyi describes this version of market exchange as a type of utopian vision in the framework of a Weberian ideal type.

But in line with the social scientific approach, the following chapters will demonstrate that despite these issues, Polanyi’s terms can still provide a helpful conceptual framework to categorize the portrayals of exchange. To directly confront problems of ambiguity, anachronism and preconceived

⁸⁸ Dale, *Karl Polanyi: The Limits of the Market*, 50–51.

⁸⁹ Dale, *Karl Polanyi: The Limits of the Market*, 73.

⁹⁰ Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics*; Yunxiang Yan, “The Gift and Gift Economy,” in *A Handbook of Economic Anthropology*, ed. James Carrier (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2005), 246–261; Charles Stanish, *Ancient Titicaca: The Evolution of Complex Societies in Southern Peru and Northern Bolivia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

ideology, the beginning of each of the chapters on portrayals of reciprocity, redistribution and market exchange will attempt to clarify the concepts of exchange both theoretically and through examples from ancient Near Eastern text and material culture, or even modern ethnography. The terminology will not dictate the discussion, but merely allow for contextualizing observations on economic activities within 1 and 2 Kings.

2.4. *Reactions to Polanyi*

The modern emergence of price-setting markets presumes their earlier absence during all periods of the ancient Near East, including Hellenistic times. Thus, the textual and material culture for trade was not really market-oriented, and any manifestation of money was more ceremonial and symbolic rather than utilitarian. This insistence brought some major criticism to Polanyi, which will be examined later. For now, suffice it to say, that Polanyi was forced into some difficult interpretations in order to maintain his marketless stance of Mesopotamia. For example, he translates *tamkāru* as a resident alien (rather than the more acceptable translation, “trader”), without the social network of a native, thus inclined to resort to anomalous economic behavior.⁹¹ Polanyi continued to soften his stance on markets throughout his career. As Johannes Renger first noted, one wonders about the authorial legitimacy of his final work, *The Livelihood of Man*, published posthumously in 1977, a full thirteen years after his death.⁹² In this work, he appeared to begin to accept the presence of supply-and-demand in pre-“Great Transformation” societies. Interestingly, in the years between his death and the more moderate views finally expressed in *The Livelihood of Man*, the formalist school arose to point out many of the shortcomings and deficiencies of Polanyi’s economic paradigm.

Anticipating the protest of his anti-market analysis, during the 1950s and 1960s, Polanyi and his anthropologist followers developed a set of concepts to lay down his argumentation against classical political economy,

⁹¹ Karl Polanyi, “Marketless Trading in Hammurabi’s Time,” in *Trade and Markets in the Early Empires*, eds. Karl Polanyi, Conrad M. Arensberg and Harry W. Pearson (Chicago: Regnery, 1957), 12–26.

⁹² Johannes M. Renger, “Patterns of Non-Institutional and Non-Commercial Exchange in Ancient Mesopotamia at the Beginning of the Second Millenium B.C.,” in *Circulation of Goods in Non-Palatial Context in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Alfonso Archi (Rome: 1984), 31–123.

that is the concept of the dual meanings of “economic,” the substantivist and the formal.⁹³ These two terms are mutually exclusive to one another. Substantivist emphasizes the interconnection of humans with their physical environment and social groups. In substantivist systems, interchange is natural and leads to satisfaction. These economies allocate goods and services primarily through reciprocal exchange and redistribution. Certain acephalous societies may not even have basic levels of redistribution, but exclusively use reciprocity for exchange. Substantivist economies also could have marketplaces, but these were not price-setting markets. Rather, these marketplaces have prearranged exchange agreements based on fixed cultural expectations. Money also could be misleading, and here the influence of the Trobriand Island community is spectacularly apparent. Just because the island community uses bundles for exchange, it does not signal a market economy. Rather, the bundles have no universal standard value, but served as special purpose money useable only within distinct kinship relations. In short, the presence of neither marketplace nor money does not necessarily equate to a capitalist market economy.

In contrast, formalist economy highlights the logical nature of material goals. This formalist nature does not derive from needs and wants, but rather from insufficiency of covering these needs and wants. Polanyi argued that formalist study of economies does not work for socially-embedded, or substantivist systems. This type of study only applies to price-setting market economies. These capitalist economies typically maintain all three mechanisms of exchange, though the commodity of money, and its accumulation tends to drive the major processes. This bifurcation between substantivist and formalist economic classification made the philosophical basis of Polanyi’s thought very apparent.⁹⁴ Most significantly, the dichotomous nature of economic systems set the stage for major attacks on the substantivist approach.

⁹³ “The simple recognition from which all such attempts must start is the fact that in referring to human activities the term economic is a compound of two meanings that have independent roots. We will call them the substantive and the formal meaning,” Polanyi, “The Economy as Instituted Process,” 243.

⁹⁴ Such an anti-positivist philosophical assumption is not surprising considering the influence from his younger brother, Michael Polanyi. See Lewis E. Hill and Eleanor T. von Ende, “Towards a Personal Knowledge of Economic History: Reflections on Our Intellectual Heritage from the Polanyi Brothers,” *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 53 (1994): 17–26.

2.4.a. *Economic Anthropology*

Two years after Polanyi's death, Scott Cook's publication of "The Obsolete 'Anti-Market' Mentality: A Critique of the Substantivist Approach to Economic Anthropology," marks the official beginning of the formalist school's response to Polanyi's substantivism.⁹⁵ The formalists argue that microeconomic models are universal, and thus applicable to all societies, even those classified as socially-embedded. People can behave in similar enough ways to warrant the development of cross-cultural theoretical constructs. These formalist constructs assume the key concept of maximization in that all peoples wanted to maximize something, including non-economic commodities such as the quality of marriage partner or levels of prestige. Both of these items are non-traditional commodities, yet they are both bound by the rule of scarcity. Thus, only one tribal leader can have the most prestige and only one marriage partner can bring the maximum benefit to an extended family. This expansion of maximization to non-monetary goods was already recognized for some time, though Cook first used it within the context of the emerging formalist-substantivist debate.⁹⁶

Cook suggested that substantivist economic models may have merit for studies in primitive societies, but that economic anthropology did not care about these systems. Cook argued that these economies were rapidly disappearing due to the continuous invasion of market forces in these previously isolated states. Thus, future economic anthropology needed to concern itself with such development of these market economies.

⁹⁵ Of course, the initial publication of *The Great Transformation* immediately spawned criticism from both theoretical and historical perspectives during the life of Polanyi, but a more or less unified response under the name of "formalism" began with Scott Cook, "The 'Anti-Market' Mentality Re-Examined: A Further Critique of the Substantivist Approach to Economic Anthropology," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 25 (1969): 378–406; Cook, "The Obsolete 'Anti-Market' Mentality: A Critique of the Substantivist Approach to Economic Anthropology," *American Anthropologist* 68 (1966): 323–345. Other formalist responses to Polanyi include Cook, "The 'Anti-Market' Mentality Re-Examined: A Further Critique of the Substantivist Approach to Economic Anthropology," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 25 (1969): 378–406; Cook, "Maximization, Economic Theory, and Anthropology: A Reply to Cancian," *American Anthropologist* 68 (1966b): 1494–1498; Edward E. LeClair, Jr., Harold K. Schneider, *Economic Anthropology: Readings in Theory and Analysis* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Co., 1968); Harold K. Schneider, *Economic Man* (New York: Free Press, 1974).

⁹⁶ "It does not affect the formal theory . . . in the least whether the individual maximizes wealth, religious piety, the annihilation of crooners or his waistline," George Stigler, *The Theory of Price* (New York: Macmillan, 1946), 63–64.

Interestingly, George Dalton, the symbolic leader of the Polanyi group after his death in 1964, acknowledged the use of substantivism as exclusively useful for archaic stateless societies.⁹⁷ This was particularly surprising as Polanyi always intended to create an economic paradigm with universal applicability.

Most significantly, the formalists argue on the philosophical unresolvability of the debate. Cook himself disparagingly wrote of the substantivists:

The Formalists . . . focus on abstractions unlimited by time and place . . .; they are scientific in outlook and mathematical in inclination, favor the deductive mode of inquiry, and are basically analytical in methodology . . . The Roman-ticists focus on situations limited in time and space . . . they are humanistic in outlook and nonmathematical in inclination, favor the inductive mode of inquiry, and are basically synthetic in methodology.⁹⁸

Although this statement appears quite out of place in today's postmodern academic climate, it nonetheless signals the epistemological differences between the formalists and substantivists. Several scholars point out the dichotomies of the debate ran along common divisive issues in social sciences. Thomas Campbell lists five such divisions as reflected in the formalist-substantivist debate: (1) idealist-materialist; (2) descriptive-normative; (3) individualistic-holistic; (4) conflict-consensus; and (5) positivist-interpretative.⁹⁹ These tensions are not resolvable as they reveal fundamental philosophical differences in the formalist-substantivist discussion. The application to the ancient Near East goes back to question of

⁹⁷ "I think it is true Polanyi's theory is appropriate for an analysis of only three of what I regard as the five types of economy and historical time periods that comprise the subject: aboriginal economies in stateless societies; aboriginal economies in tribal kingdoms; and early traditional, pre-modern sub-sets of peasantries in states. The theory presented in *Trade and Markets* cannot analyze the bands, tribes, or peasantries studied by anthropologists as they changed under colonial rule or as they are presently changing in post-colonial development." George Dalton, "Writings That Clarify Theoretical Disputes over Karl Polanyi's Work," in *The Life and Work of Karl Polanyi*, ed. Kari Polanyi-Levitt (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1990), 166–167. Interestingly, Dalton made these remarks before Karl Polanyi's daughter, Kari Polanyi-Levitt during a conference honoring his intellectual legacy. Yet by doing so, he confirmed the antiquated nature of Polanyian exchange in modern economic anthropology.

⁹⁸ Cook, "The Obsolete 'Anti-Market' Mentality," 327.

⁹⁹ Tom Campbell, *Seven Theories of Human Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981); Elman Service recognizes eight tensions in anthropology; Service, "The Bifurcation of Method and Theory in Ethnology," in *Themes in Ethnology and Culture History: Essays in Honor of David F. Aberle*, ed. Leland Donald (Meerut, India: Folklore Institute, Archana Publications, 1987). Barry Isaac recognizes similar polarities in economics between institutionalists and conventional microeconomists. Barry L. Isaac, "Karl Polanyi," in *A Handbook of Economic Anthropology*, 20.

applicability of any social scientific theory to ancient societies. Any universally-accepted economic framework of the entire ancient Near East is impossible. Accordingly, today's scholars of the ancient economy must command fluency of their own assumptions as well as the assumptions of their dialogue partners.¹⁰⁰

Cook's article unleashed a torrent of formalist positions further attacking the substantivist theories.¹⁰¹ Whereas substantivist theory dominated the academy during the 1960s and 1970s when anthropology was both cross-temporal and cross-cultural, the formalist barrage took its toll, and the 1980s saw the re-emergence of the formalist school in economic anthropology. Significantly, Stuart Plattner's widely-used textbook *Economic Anthropology* devotes merely three pages to Polanyi.¹⁰² Dalton's statements certainly helped drive the demise, as well as some of the overzealousness of Polanyi's anti-market mentality. For ancient Near Eastern studies, Assyriology played a major role in further dismantling, then reformulating the substantivist view of the ancient Near East.

2.4.b. Assyriology

Whereas the formalist scholars attack the theoretical foundations of substantivism, Assyriologists critique the philology behind Polanyi's empirical evidence from Mesopotamia. The Assyriological response to Polanyi primarily came at the direction of his regrettable article, "Marketless Trading in Hammurabi's Time," an easy target in that Polanyi revealed a limited sophistication of philological and historical matters.¹⁰³ In this article, Polanyi insisted on the lack of markets based several questionable strands of evidence. First, Herodotus said that the Persians had no Greek "marketplaces" (ἀγορά), and that the period of Old Babylonia was essentially analogous with the Persian period. Second, neither textual nor

¹⁰⁰ Much of the formalist-substantivist debate actually goes much further back than Polanyi. The late nineteenth century saw two related debates within European scholarship. One revolved over the concept of a Hegelian development to an economic system with ancient systems being the most primitive. Karl Bücher symbolically represented the primitivist view, and they were countered by the modernists (Eduard Meyer) who believed that ancient Greek and modern German economic systems were essentially equivalent in that they were both driven by capitalist motivations. Not surprisingly, Polanyi only quoted from the former. Karl Bücher, *Die Entstehung Der Volkswirtschaft* (Tübingen: H. Laupp'sche Buchhandlung, 1906); Eduard Meyer, *Kleine Schriften* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1924).

¹⁰¹ LeClair, *Economic Anthropology: Readings in Theory and Analysis*; Schneider, *Economic Man*; Cook, "Maximization, Economic Theory, and Anthropology."

¹⁰² Stuart Plattner, *Economic Anthropology* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989).

¹⁰³ Polanyi, "Marketless Trading in Hammurabi's Time."

archaeological data reveals any evidence for markets. Third, Polanyi tried to refute the use of Old Assyrian caravan traders for the proof of long distance market exchange, categorizing this activity as administered trade. Thus, he saw traders as state agents, traveling these enormous distances from Assur to Anatolia under the protection of the Assyrian state and the directive to deliver textiles and return with copper. Thus, these traders did not face financial risks, and they were not in position to negotiate prices.

Ancient Near Eastern scholars, particularly Assyriologists, quickly discredited Polanyi's alleged empirical evidence. Concerning the textual evidence, Herodotus implicitly was more likely stating that the Persians did not cheat in comparison to the Greeks.¹⁰⁴ Because both ethnographic and philological evidence suggests that the markets were open-air settings often by the city gate, material culture does not easily reveal remains of physical markets. Wolfgang Röllig showed that Akkadian indeed had several terms for a market.¹⁰⁵ Most significantly, Assyriologists quickly demonstrated the shortcomings of Polanyi's interpretation of the Anatolian caravan trade.¹⁰⁶ In many instances, these Old Assyrian acted independent of the state. Financial losses were common and in fact, the texts often show that agents worried about such losses. Assur did not import copper, but only silver and gold, exclusively for the purpose of accumulating wealth.¹⁰⁷

Other Assyriologists attacked the substantivist view from different chronological periods. Alice Slotsky and Peter Temin both use Neo-Babylonian archives to show market forces at work, the former through philology and the latter through statistical analyses of astronomical texts that record commodity prices.¹⁰⁸ Daniel Snell cautiously suggests the presence of private dealings within a small, yet well-integrated corpus of Ur III

¹⁰⁴ Daniel C. Snell, *Life in the Ancient Near East* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), 149–150.

¹⁰⁵ Wolfgang Röllig, "Der Altmesopotamische Markt," *WdO* 8 (1976): 286–295.

¹⁰⁶ Klaas R. Veenhof, *Aspects of the Old Assyrian Trade and Its Terminology* (Leiden: Brill, 1972); Veenhof, "Some Social Effects of the Old Assyrian Trade," *Iraq* 39 (1977): 109–118.

¹⁰⁷ John Gledhill and Morgens Larsen, "The Polanyi Paradigm and a Dynamic Analysis of Archaic States," in *Theory and Explanation in Archaeology: The Southampton Conference*, eds. Colin and M.J. Rowlands Renfrew, B.A. Segraves (New York: Academic Press, 1982), 197–229.

¹⁰⁸ Alice Louise Slotsky, *The Bourse of Babylon: Market Quotations in the Astronomical Diaries of Babylon* (Bethesda: CDL Press, 1997); Peter Temin, *Price Behaviour in Ancient Babylon* (Tel Aviv: Research Center on Jewish Law and Economics, 2002).

silver accounts.¹⁰⁹ Even Leo Oppenheim began to distance himself from pure substantivism. In his 1970 paper on Mesopotamian trade, he omitted any reference to his own contribution to Polanyi's 1957 edited volume.¹¹⁰

Undoubtedly, all of these formalist arguments have merit as the textual data makes the existence of some measure of supply-and-demand irrefutable. To Polanyi's defense, he made such extreme claims when a modernist perspective dominated study of the ancient world. Although Polanyi tried to confront these anachronistic perceptions a bit overzealously, the Assyriologists refuted the substantivist assertions with commensurate vigor. More recently, Assyriologists continue to accept the fundamental tenets of Polanyi within a more moderate assessment of the formalist-substantivist discussion. Renger and Robert Englund independently argue that market forces, whereas undeniably present in the ancient Near East, played a subsidiary role to more socially-embedded exchange processes.¹¹¹ Other Assyriologists may be a bit more generous to the display of supply-and-demand, yet still emphasize the social nature of trade.¹¹²

2.4.c. *The Informal Economy*

In the 1970s, a new branch of economic anthropology arose in the spirit of Polanyi's substantivism. This subdiscipline, known as informal economy,

¹⁰⁹ Daniel C. Snell, *Ledgers and Prices: Early Mesopotamian Merchant Accounts* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1982); Snell, "Marketless Trading in Our Time," *JESHO* 34 (1991): 129–141.

¹¹⁰ A. Leo Oppenheim, "Trade in the Ancient Near East," in *Vth International Congress of Economic History* (Mocow: Nauka, 1970), 1–37.

¹¹¹ In particular, see Johannes Renger, "Patterns of Non-Institutional and Non-Commercial Exchange,"; Renger, "Zu den Altbabylonischen Archives aus Sippar," in *Cuneiform Archives and Libraries*, ed. Klaas R. Veenhof (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 96–15; also cf. Renger, "On Economic Structures in Ancient Mesopotamia," *Orientalia* 63 (1994): 157–208; Renger, "Probleme und Perspektive einer Wirtschaftsgeschichte Mesopotamiens," *Saeculum, Jahrbuch für Universalgeschichte* 40 (1989): 166–178; Robert K. Englund, "Hard Work—Where Will It Get You? Labor Management in Ur III Mesopotamia," *JESHO* 50 (1991): 255–280; Englund, *Organisation Und Verwaltung Der Ur III—Fischerei* (Berlin: Reimer, 1990). Renger remains the most staunch post-Polanyi substantivist. In confronting the Old Assyrian evidence, he concedes to the obvious profit motives in some of the texts, but declares that this was a particularly exceptional case; Renger, "On Economic Structures," 164, n. 12.

¹¹² Anne Goddeeris, *Economy and Society in Northern Babylonia in the Early Old Babylonian Period (ca. 2000–1800 BC)* (Leuven: Peeters, 2002); Marc van de Mieroop, *Cuneiform Texts and the Writing of History* (London: Routledge, 1999); van de Mieroop, *Society and Enterprise in Old Babylonian Ur* (Berlin: Raimer, 1992); Marvin Powell, "Wir Müssen unsere Nische Nutzen: Monies, Motives, and Methods in Babylonian Economics," in *Trade and Finance in Ancient Mesopotamia*, ed. Jan Gerrit Dercksen (Leiden-Istanbul: 1999), 5–24; Norman Yoffee, *Explaining Trade in Ancient Western Asia* (Malibu: Undena, 1981); Yoffee, *The Economic Role of the Crown in the Old Babylonian Period* (Malibu: Urdena, 1977).

focused on economic activity as “those activities that capture resources by (1) increasing private access to community resources beyond the normative allocation; and (2) partially or totally evading public monitoring or entry into the general accounts as well as any obligatory or reciprocal corporate assessment (that is, tax).”¹¹³ Although the informal sector certainly existed as long as economies existed, its emergence as a subject of study only occurred in the 1970s out of two main factors. First, the interest in economic development in Two-Thirds World countries revealed the existence of two interrelated spheres, the formal and the informal economy.¹¹⁴ Second, studies on the socialist state showed that illicit processes could overrun the most rigidly controlled economic systems.¹¹⁵ The informal economy presumes that many measurable parameters of activity are undetectable through conventional means.

The difficulties in measuring the informal economy in modern times suggest that detecting such activity in ancient times is virtually impossible. Yet the informal economy can present a helpful theoretical construct for this present study. The informal economy often represents an enormous sector of the overall economic system. The more the social matrix fails to adequately provide satisfaction, the more illicit mechanisms develop within the very same system. These activities often involve those disenfranchised from the economic protection of the official social system. Most importantly, acknowledging the existence of the informal economy forces one to think of its potential manifestations. If Esarhaddon collected tolls along the Arabian spice route in return for safe passage, then one must presume a sector of banditry and smuggling that simultaneously existed in Iron Age IIB. If Solomon’s forced labor was overly oppressive, then one needs to consider the existence of measures such as bribes to avoid these duties. Despite the lack of available evidence, such questioning adds to our comprehensive picture of ancient economies. The informal economy provides a suitable model for contextualizing some of the non-elite reciprocity in Chapter Three.

¹¹³ M. Estellie Smith, “The Informal Economy,” in *Economic Anthropology*, ed. Stuart Plattner (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989): 292–317.

¹¹⁴ Keith Hart, “Informal Income Opportunities and Urban Development in Ghana,” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 11 (1973): 61–89.

¹¹⁵ Joseph Berliner, *Factory and Manager in the USSR* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957); Dieter Cassel and Ulrich Cichy, “Explaining the Growing Shadow Economy in East and West: A Comparative Systems Approach,” *Comparative Economic Studies* 28 (1968): 34–47.

2.4.d. *Biblical Studies*

Recently, biblical studies have borrowed from Polanyi's paradigm to reconstruct the social world of the Bible. Particularly in the Hebrew Bible, scholars have embraced the Polanyian notion of reciprocity in relation to power displays and categories of honor and shame. Reciprocity also allows for Western scholars to make better sense of some of the cryptic giving patterns in Hebrew Bible narratives. Thus, Victor Matthews explains the reciprocal exchange between Jacob and Esau, longtime enemies, as a literary device to portray social tension.¹¹⁶ Gary Stansell examines the power of reciprocity to shift social relations in several passages of the DtrH.¹¹⁷ Menahem Herman departs from the traditional view of tithe as a tax, and interprets it more in line of partnership and covenant with God under the principles of reciprocity.¹¹⁸ Interestingly, all three of the above studies make little or no explicit reference to Polanyi, but rather rely on more developed reciprocal models of Mauss and Sahlins. This does not necessarily reflect the bibliographic deficiencies of these works, but more so the pervasive influence of Polanyi in that the concept of reciprocity is now a stock term in the academy.

Though Polanyi has explanatory power for many social relations of the Hebrew narratives, his contribution to studies on biblical economic structures remains minimal. Ronald Simkins summarizes, "Biblical studies has virtually ignored the developments in economic anthropology."¹¹⁹ In the only explicitly economic analysis of ancient Israel through a Polanyian model, Simkins determines that monarchic inequalities maintained themselves through the mode of patronage. But by his own admission, Simkins ultimately relies more on Marx than on Polanyi in tying the social structures to the crucial economic decisions of the day.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ Matthews also uses reciprocity in the meeting of Jeroboam and the "man of Judah" in 1 Kings 13; Victor H. Matthews, "The Unwanted Gift: Implications of Obligatory Gift Giving in Ancient Israel," *Sem* 68 (1999): 91–104.

¹¹⁷ Gary Stansell, "The Gift in Ancient Israel," *Sem* 87 (1999): 65–90.

¹¹⁸ Menahem Herman, "Tithe as Gift: The Biblical Institution in Light of Mauss's "Prestationtheory",*" AJSR* 18 (1993): 51–73.

¹¹⁹ Ronald A. Simkins, "Patronage and the Political Economy of Monarchic Israel," *Sem* 87 (1999), 125.

¹²⁰ Simkins builds on the theories of Rhoda Halperin, who was the first to draw out specific attachment between the ideas of Marx and Polanyi, a connection that many substantivists of the late 1970s and early 1980s vehemently denied; Simkins, "Patronage and the Political Economy," 124. See also Halperin, "Polanyi, Marx, and the Institutional Paradigm in Economic Anthropology" *" Research in Economic Anthropology* 7 (1984): 339–368. Largely stimulated by Bruce Malina and the Context Group, New Testament scholars

2.5. *Summary and Conclusions*

This brief review of the intellectual history behind Polanyi's paradigm of exchange helps clarify his own positions. Like any social theory, Polanyi had a voice within a longstanding dialogue concerning political economy, spanning Smith, Marx, Weber and Malinowski. By clarifying the intellectual context, the paradigms of reciprocity, redistribution and market exchange emerge more clearly. The portrayals of exchange in 1 and 2 Kings are now more readily identifiable.

Although Polanyi did not meet his initial objective to influence modern economic policy in European states, he serendipitously had an enormous impact throughout the humanities.¹²¹ Aside from the threefold categories of exchange in reciprocity, redistribution and market exchange, Polanyi's work opened wide conversations in ancient Near Eastern and Classical studies regarding the nature of economies. Over a generation after the publication of *The Great Transformation*, the substantivist—formalist debate has emerged from bifurcation to a much more moderate discussion. Rarely does any ancient Near Eastern scholar advocate a completely substantivist or a completely formalist view of economic society.¹²²

utilize Polanyian reciprocity as an attractive tool to unpack the social nature of the gospels; Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, 3rd ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001); also see Zeba A. Crook, "Reciprocity—Covenantal Exchange as a Test Case," in *Ancient Israel: The Old Testament in Its Social Context*, ed. Philip Esler (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 78–91; Crook, "Reflections on Culture and Social-Scientific Models," *JBL* 124 (2005): 515–532; Alan Kirk, "Karl Polanyi, Marshall Sahlins, and the Study of Ancient Social Relations," *JBL* 126 (2007): 182–191; Kirk, "'Love Your Enemies,' the Golden Rule, and Ancient Reciprocity (Luke 6:27–35)" *JBL* 122 (2003): 667–686; Douglas E. Oakman, "Money in the Moral Universe of the New Testament," in *The Social Settings of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Wolfgang W. Stegemann (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), 335–348.

¹²¹ Significantly, Polanyi has also had tremendous influence on two closely related fields, Classics and Egyptology. In the classics, Polanyi's understanding of socially-embedded economies found its way to Moses Finley, which has in turn catalyzed a renewal of the formalist-substantivist debate in the classical world; Finley, *The Ancient Economy*. Polanyi has made a large impact on Egyptology, via Janssen's seminal publication of in which he emphasizes the social order of the New Kingdom. In evaluating textual evidence at Deir el-Medineh, he determines that reciprocity and not market exchange is the primary mechanism for the economic structure of New Kingdom Egypt. J.J. Janssen, "Prolegomena to the Study of Egypt's Economic History During the New Kingdom," *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 3 (1975): 127–185; also see Edward Bleiberg, "The Economy of Ancient Egypt," in *CANE*, 1375. Recently, Polanyian interpretation of ancient Egypt has met challenge. See Warburton, *State and Economy in Ancient Egypt*, Barry Kemp, *Ancient Egypt*.

¹²² "It must be stressed that it is a question of the relative proportion of reciprocity, redistribution, and market exchange, and not their simple presence or absence." Schloen, *The House of the Father*, 81.

Consequently, this study does not seek to disprove the existence of any of these mechanisms, but rather to analyze them as viable categories in the study of the economic structures in 1 and 2 Kings. In embarking on this task, the prescient statement of Max Weber, from one hundred years ago appears more applicable than ever: "What has been sketched above indicates that somewhat complex economic institutions existed, but it is not now possible for us to judge the relative importance of these phenomena for the economic structure of Mesopotamia."¹²³ The last century of research has only confirmed the complexity of economies in the ancient Near East. With this task in mind, we can now turn to the biblical texts for its voice on this matter.

¹²³ Weber, *The Agrarian Society of Ancient Civilizations*, 103.

CHAPTER THREE

SYMMETRICAL RECIPROCITY IN THE BOOK OF KINGS

3.1. *Reciprocity in the Ancient Near East*

Building on Mauss' theoretical construct of gifts, Polanyi argued that the cohesive kinship structure of the ancient Near East used reciprocity as its primary distributive mechanism. Polanyi's description of the dynamics of reciprocity initially convinced Leo Oppenheim of its suitability for much of the ancient Near East, particularly from the Late Bronze Age to the Persian period. In *Ancient Mesopotamia*, Oppenheim appears to write with Polanyi standing adjacently and peering over the shoulder with approval:

Merchants of the type found in Kanish, Assur, and probably also in Ur have disappeared. The traders have become royal emissaries carrying precious gifts from one ruler to the other and are sometimes called *ša mandatti*, a designation which seems to refer to the source of their capital... Strangely enough, cuneiform texts, soon after the Amarna period, are silent with respect to trade and traders, and this silence extends, for all practical purposes, to the very end of the Babylonian empire.¹

Certainly, Oppenheim overstates his point and even comes to effectively recant from this position in a later publication.² But Oppenheim made an important corrective to the implicit yet pervasive capitalist presuppositions of Western interpreters in that ancient Near Eastern palatial trade had social repercussions. The nature of exchange in the Amarna Letters illustrates the importance of Oppenheim's claim.

The Amarna Letters, a Late Bronze Age collection of over 300 epistolary texts written between various Levantine polities and the Egyptian rulers, comprise a valuable source for understanding reciprocity in the ancient Near East. With the absence of significant extant Iron Age II Levantine comparative archives, one can turn to this rich Late Bronze Age corpus to see the pervasive acceptance of reciprocity as a mechanism of international

¹ A. Leo Oppenheim, *Ancient Mesopotamia: Portrait of a Dead Civilization*, Revised ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 93.

² Oppenheim, "Trade in the Ancient Near East," 1–37.

exchange. More than literary, cultic, legal or administrative genres, these epistolary texts reveal the interconnectedness between exchange and social relations. In contrast to the anthropological debates of the 1960s through 1980s, these letters make obvious the inseparable synthesis between substantivist and formalist concerns during times of antiquity. The epistolary texts show that maintaining relationships could provide the key to future utilitarian benefit along with political legitimacy.

With its emphasis on social relationships, Kevin Avruch, as an anthropologist and non-Near Eastern specialist, emphasizes the language of family and kinship as the root metaphor of the Amarna letters.³ A pervasiveness of gift culture reinforces this kinship metaphor by defining the social boundaries between the giver and the recipients. Liverani summarizes the stipulations of gifting in the Amarna corpus, "The fundamental norms are that gifts, like hospitality, cannot be asked for, must be given, must be accepted and appreciated, and must be reciprocated, in an increased amount."⁴ To illustrate from a few examples, maintaining a long-standing relationship between Assyria and Egypt requires great quantities of precious metals.⁵ A Mitannian king seeking to politically reconcile with Egypt sends generous gifts on behalf of himself, his brother, his sister with the request, "May my brother seek friendly relations with me."⁶ The Babylonian King Burraburias II reminds the Pharaoh, "Since my fathers and your fathers with one another established friendly relations, they sent to one another rich presents and they refused not one another any good request."⁷ Five of the letters are nothing but long inventories of reciprocal gifts containing precious metals, stones, statues, jewelry, chariots, fine garments and woods.⁸ Most significantly, a letter from Cyprus to Egypt records a significant gift of ivory, among other objects, to the Egyptian ruler, and asks for ivory in return!⁹ The trade of the same essential

³ Kevin Avruch, "Reciprocity, Equality, and Status-Anxiety in the Amarna Letters," in *Amarna Diplomacy: The Beginnings of International Relations* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 159.

⁴ Mario Liverani, "The Great Powers' Club," in *Amarna Diplomacy: The Beginnings of International Relations*, eds. Raymond Cohen, and Raymond Westbrook (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 24.

⁵ The Assyrian king expresses disappointment at the small sum of gold, and after reviewing the history of receiving twenty talents of gold he states, "If you are friendly, then send much gold!" EA 16:32-33.

⁶ EA 17:51.

⁷ EA 9:7-10.

⁸ EA 13, 14, 22, 25, 120.

⁹ EA 16:32-33.

product over a vast distance makes no commercial sense, but rather appeals to a social bond between the two polities. All of these long-distance letters display the overarching concern for strong relations with Egypt. With extended obeisance formulae and expressions of blessing, the writers display an overt interest in the social welfare of the Egyptian rulers.

Even the very term for gift in the Amarna letters, *šulmanu*, shows its socially-embedded nature. In the Early and Middle Bronze Ages, the *šulmanu*-gift meant one of two possibilities: a gift from vassals to those of higher rank or a peace offering intended for deities.¹⁰ But with the Late Bronze Age Amarna texts and other contemporary examples from western peripheral Akkadian corpi such as Boghazköi, *šulmanu* now becomes “Exchange between equal rank.”¹¹ The *šulmanu* serves as a requisite part of maintaining ties between international polities. Where New Kingdom Egypt had hegemonic influence over the city-states of the Southern Levant, they did not exchange *šulmanu*, but rather merely required tribute from these polities as reflective of the one-sided relationship.¹² But for faraway empires, the Amarna letters portray Egypt from a position of relative symmetry as long distances prevented total control over the lands of Cyprus, Mitanni, Babylon and Assyria. The Egyptian gave and received *šulmanu* to these powers in order to maintain official ties. Thus, the Amarna Corpus reveals social bonds in long-distance exchange expressed by a fictive kinship.

But like any dysfunctional family, the kinship terminology does little to mask a subtext of contention and jockeying for social position in relation to one another. Raymond Westbrook studied the subtle rhetorical devices within the gift giving of the Babylonians and the Egyptians.¹³ He pointed out a contrast between the external message of self-deprecation with a subtext that reflects ingenuity, cunning and diplomatic savvy in order to gain better gifts. Raymond Cohen suggests that the respectful obeisance formulae have little substance compared to the “major relationship metagames”

¹⁰ CAD Š Part 3, 244–247.

¹¹ CAD Š Part 3, 245.

¹² In this case, Egypt coerces favorable reciprocal results from a position of bargaining power. In the Late Bronze Age, the strong New Kingdom military might dictated the terms of exchange to the vassal states in demanding regular payments. In return, these vassal states asked for military aid and supplies from the Egyptians, presumably with less than desirous results. This type of exchange best fits the anthropological concept of patronage with the *šulmanu* as a “thinly disguised fee.” Raymond Westbrook, “Patronage in the Ancient Near East,” *JESHO* 48 (2005), 219.

¹³ Westbrook, “Babylonian Diplomacy and the Amarna Letters,” *JAOS* 120 (2000): 377–382.

where the partners negotiate their relative stance to each other.¹⁴ Accordingly, the gift exchange of Amarna does not fall into Sahlins' category of a general reciprocity, "pure gift without any expectation."¹⁵ Rather, Amarna gifts explicitly require balanced and expeditious return. Exchanged items often fall short of expectations in quantity, quality and timing.¹⁶ Alongside these dissatisfactory gifts, the recipients complain about the present state of their status to the Egyptians to the other polity leaders. For example, the Assyrian king protests the gift in comparison to the gift that he heard the Mitannians received.¹⁷ The Babylonian king objects to the inevitable loss of prestige to the Assyrians when they see the insufficient Egyptian escort for their daughter.¹⁸ The seemingly superficial and petulant complaints make better sense in light of the association of diplomatic gifts as powerful tools to increase one's status and prestige.

This subtext of self-interest contradicts the substantivist claims of completely disinterested trade, as the reciprocal *šulmanu* gifting often invoke principles of classical political economy, such as comparative advantage and marginal utility. Cyprus sends copper from its rich local mines. Babylon and Assyria send lapis lazuli, more easily accessible from the mountains of Afghanistan. Babylon also sends abundant supplies of silver in exchange for Egyptian gold at a four-to-one ratio, a major adjustment from earlier eras and the natural outcome of a growing supply.¹⁹ Most of

¹⁴ Raymond Cohen, "All in the Family: Ancient Near Eastern Diplomacy," *International Negotiations* 1 (1996): 11–18.

¹⁵ Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics*, 191–196.

¹⁶ Expected solid gold statues are in fact only coated wooden ones (*EA* 26–27); gold claimed to weigh forty minas, when melted down weighs barely ten (*EA* 7:63–72); gold suspiciously resembles silver (*EA* 3:13–22; *EA* 20: 46–59); gold arrives too late (*EA* 4:36–50; *EA* 41:14–15); and gold comes in smaller and smaller quantities (*EA* 9:6–18; *EA* 16:22–34; *EA* 19; *EA* 27:45–51, 104–109; *EA* 29.)

¹⁷ *EA* 16:19–34.

¹⁸ *EA* 11:16–22.

¹⁹ Textual evidence shows the Mesopotamian Middle Bronze silver:gold ratio to roughly stand at about 8:1 in Babylon and 8:1 in Cappadocia whereas the Egyptian Middle Kingdom silver, imported from the Levant or Greece, was actually more valuable than gold. See Howard Martin Farber, "An Examination of Long Term Fluctuations in Prices and Wages for North Babylonia During the Old Babylonian Period," *JESHO* 21 (1978): 1–51; Paul Garelli, *Les Assyriens En Cappadoce* (Paris: Depositaires: Librairie A. Maisonneuve, 1963); J.R. Harris, *Lexicographical Studies in Ancient Egyptian Materials* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1961); W.F. Leemans, "Gold," in *Reallexikon Der Assyriologie*, ed. W. Von Soden (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 1969), 512–513; Ronald F.G. Sweet, "On Prices, Moneys and Money Use in the Old Babylonian Period" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1958). But from the Late Bronze Age, the silver:gold ratio reaches an equivalency of about 4:1 throughout much of the Near East. In Egypt, gold production grows exponentially and reaches an overall ration of about 2:1; Dietrich Klemm, Rosmarie Klemm and Andreas Murr, "Gold of the Pharaohs," *African*

these distant polities request gold from Egypt, which they had in relative abundance from their Nubian mines. Herein lies an important aspect of reciprocity—it is indeed socially-embedded and dependent on the bounds of symmetrical relationship. At the same time, such social constraints do not translate into the complete absence of scarcity, needs and wants. In line with the intellectual development of substantivist theory and the general acceptance of a mixed economy in the ancient Near East, the Amarna corpus proves that this socially-embedded reciprocal gifting serves as a method to meet material wants and needs. The actual language and context of the *šulmanu* exchange argues against both extreme formalism and substantivism as both forces are clearly at work. The Amarna letters reveal that the great kings exchanged gifts for social status in order to obtain greater material goods.

A Late Bronze Age Akkadian letter in Aphek specifically demonstrates the difficulty in artificially separating rational and a-rational economic exchange.²⁰ The letter details the loan of a large amount of wheat from an Ugaritic prefect, Takuḥlina, to an Egyptian official, Ḥaya, presumably residing in Aphek. Some parts of the letter reveal a very sterile economic transfer. At one point, the Takuḥlina arranged for a delivery of a large amount of wheat to the Egyptian in the port city of Jaffa, and now requested repayment of the precise amount of 250 2/6 kor of wheat. But the final section of the letter reveals an interesting twist. In an effort to motivate the repayment to a presumably higher Egyptian official, the letter includes a gift (*šulmanu*) of an amount of blue wool and red wool. By giving this gift, the Ugaritic courier presumes to place an obligation on the Egyptian for immediate repayment. The language of the letter suggests that this *šulmanu* functions neither as an additive penalty nor economic motivation, but rather the gift creates a context of obligation for the Egyptian to react.

Both textual and archaeological finds at Ugarit further highlight a reciprocity with both formalist and substantivist concerns in the Late Bronze Age Levantine Coast. Christopher Monroe describes a paradigm for

Earth Sciences 33 (2001): 643–659. Only the forces of supply-and-demand can explain this movement towards equilibrium. The rest of the ancient Near East found sudden access to a vast supply of gold through Egypt, thus their real cost of obtaining significantly lowered. At the same time, Egypt met with a sudden demand for gold, thus they could obtain a relatively higher price in terms of silver.

²⁰ David I. Owen, “An Akkadian Letter from Ugarit at Tel Aphek,” *TA* 8 (1981): 1–17; *COS* 3.94.

official gifting, which belies an entrepreneurial profit-seeking spirit.²¹ Kevin McGeough recognizes that this reciprocal exchange also served the non-royal population as well.²² He categorizes several Ugaritic and Akkadian texts, which document the language of reciprocity within the boundaries of a Polanyian definition. The explicit rhetoric displays generosity though kinship terminology, but the subtext may reveal more ideological interests.²³ Marian Feldman's work on the Late Bronze Age international *koiné* argues for long-distance international trade as reciprocal exchange according to the luxury objects.²⁴ Feldman argues that these luxury goods serve as *šulmanu* offerings within the social setting of gift exchange diplomacy, particularly in relation to kingship.²⁵

Throughout the ancient history of the Levant, the vast trade networks of the Late Bronze Age provide the most likely setting for pure market exchange. The diverse western peripheral Akkadian texts show that the economic powers had access to information. The Euphrates, Orontes and Mediterranean Sea allow for relatively easy transportation of commodities to distant lands. The different topographic and geographic characteristics of Anatolia, Egypt, Mesopotamia and the Levant tantalize the nations to take advantage of obvious opportunity costs. With accessibility, knowledge and comparative margins, the Late Bronze Age Levantine economy displays all of the preconditions for a supply-and-demand exchange economy. But instead, the rich textual and archaeological evidence clearly shows socially-embedded reciprocal exchange as the dominant trade mechanism. Such reciprocal exchange does not necessarily preclude the traits of *homo economicus*, such as scarcity, wants and profit-maximizing

²¹ Monroe, *Scales of Fate*, 241–274.

²² McGeough, *Exchange Relationships at Ugarit*, 359.

²³ Both Liverani and Monroe suggest that language of reciprocity belies profit-seeking—but this is entirely consistent with the broader perspective of reciprocity. See Mario Liverani, *International Relations in the Ancient Near East, 1600–1100 B.C.* (New York: Palgrave, 2001); Monroe, *Scales of Fate*.

²⁴ Marian H. Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design: Luxury Arts and An "International Style" In the Ancient Near East, 1400–1200 BCE.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006); Feldman, "Luxurious Forms: Redefining a Mediterranean "International Style," 1400–1200 B.C.E.," *The Arts Bulletin* 84 (2002): 6–29.

²⁵ "Like the greeting letters, the international artistic tradition, manifest in easily portable luxury items that could have circulated as gifts, provided a shared code that helped to reinforce a collective identity of ruling elites... Rhetorically, these rulers considered each other as equals, although they came from culturally disparate and potentially conflicting regional traditions and often engaged in military actions against one another," Feldman, "Luxurious Forms," 24.

behavior. But in general, the Amarna corpus demonstrates the pervasive nature of reciprocity in the midst of thriving long-distance trade.

Admittedly, the Amarna Corpus reflects a social setting several centuries earlier than the initial textualization of Kings and the rest of the DtrH. As mentioned, Iron Age IIB-C has limited epigraphic evidence, certainly nothing analogous to anything as rich and abundant as the Late Bronze Age. But despite this chronological difference, the biblical portrayals of the United Monarchy reflect a palatial economy that shares certain characteristics with the Late Bronze Age powers. It is hopeful that this background provides a helpful insight for understanding the role of polity-to-polity reciprocal exchange under Solomon.

3.2. *Reciprocity among Polities*

3.2.a. *King Solomon and King Hiram of Tyre*

Within the text of 1 and 2 Kings, the international relationships with Solomon serve as the closest analogies to Late Bronze Age palatial reciprocity. Such a projection of a glorious past among the great polities of the Near East is entirely congruent with the royal ideology of the DtrH. Primarily, the text of Kings portrays the United Monarchy as creating and maintaining reciprocal arrangements with both the Phoenician city-state Tyre and the Arabian land of Sheba. Like the Bronze Age epistolary texts, these reciprocal partnerships display a mixed economy of both substantivist and formalist concerns.

1 Kings 5:15–32 narrates the establishment of a symmetrical relationship between Solomon and Hiram, King of Tyre.²⁶ Earlier in the narrative, the DtrH records that Hiram had sent materials and specialized workers for David to construct a palace.²⁷ After 1 Kings 2:12–5:14 establishes Solomon as the heir of the Davidic line, the renewal of earlier covenant partners fits the continuing narrative theme of legitimation. The initial contact comes after the coronation of Solomon, as it was standard to visit a neighboring polity upon confirmation of a succession.²⁸ The two leaders

²⁶ Stock phrases such as *לשם יהוה אלהיו* (“To build a house for the name of the YHWH his God”) in verses 17, 18 and *הנניח יהוה אלהי לי מסביב* (“YHWH my God gave me rest all around”) unequivocally tie this passage to the DtrH.

²⁷ 2 Sam 5:11.

²⁸ EA 33 documents a gift of copper from the king of Cyprus to a newly installed Egyptian pharaoh. “I have heard [th]at you sit upon [the th]rone of your father . . . [and I he]ard

agree to exchange enormous amounts of cedars and cypress for commensurate supplies of wheat and oil. Comparative ancient Near Eastern texts attest to the high value and status of cedars and cypress from the rich Phoenician forests.²⁹ In particular, the cedars measure much taller and broader than anything other type of timber in the Southern Levant, and they could support the general frame for the enormous structures of royalty. The wood is durable, lasting, fragrant and even fungal resistant, and thus cedars became a standard wood for official use throughout the ancient Near East.³⁰ In order to act as a reciprocal partner, Solomon must supply a vast foodstock. The exaggeration is obvious, as even the biblical description of Solomon's vast kingdom would have some difficulty in supplying such a surplus of 20,000 kors of wheat (800 tons) and twenty cors of oil (8,000 liters). The generous exchange of goods indicates the social partnership between the United Monarchy and the Tyrian city-state.

Besides the elite nature of the commodities, the language behind the exchange between Solomon and Hiram highlights the covenantal affection that undergirds the economic transaction.³¹ The narrative recounts the long-standing relationship between Israel and Tyre that began under Davidic rule, a relationship characterized in that "Hiram loved David all the days."³² William Moran observed that the Semitic term "love" signifies the

the greeting of m[y brother] and I will bring to you as a pledge two hundred (talents of) copper." *EA* 33:10–16. In the Bible, David sends servants, presumably with gifts (cf. 1 Sam 10) to acknowledge the succession of the King of Ammon. 1 Sam 10; cf. Noth, *Könige*, 89; Ernst Würthwein, *Die Bücher Der Könige: 1. Kön. 1–16* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1977), 53.

²⁹ The Egyptian Tale of Wenamun has the protagonist travel to Byblos on a royal mission to "Fetch timber for the great noble bark of Amub-Re, King of Gods," *COS* 1.41 (2); The usage of the Akkadian term for "cedars" (*erēnu*) in a Neo-Babylonian royal inscription further illustrates this royal grandeur with Nebuchadnezzar boasting, "(The gods) disclosed to me where the giant cedars grow, which since days remote have grown high, and very thick, standing concealed in the depth of the Hermon," *CAD E*, vol. 4, 274. Some of the prophetic imagery using זָרַא ("cedars") and בְּרוֹשׁ ("cypress") include Isa 14:8; 37:24 (cf. 1 Kgs 17:23); Jer 22:7, 14–15; Ezek 17:3; 27:5; 31:8; Amos 2:9; Zech 11:1–2. Equally significant, the prophets often point to these majestic timbers in illustrating the promises of God: Isa 41:19; 55:13; 60:13; Ezek 17:22–25.

³⁰ J.F. Drinkard, "Wood," in *New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. Katherine Doob Sakenfeld (Nashville: Abingdon, 2009), 892–893.

³¹ Frank Moore Cross, "Kinship and Covenant in Ancient Israel," in *From Epic to Canon: History and Literature in Ancient Israel* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1998), 7–11.

³² 1 Kgs 5:15. Jeffery Kah-Jin Kuan suggests the LXX as the more original reading according to *lectio difficilior lectio probabilior*: καὶ ἀπέστειλεν Χιράμ βασιλεὺς Τύρου τοὺς παῖδας αὐτοῦ χρίσαι τὸν Σαλωμων, "Tyre sent his servants to anoint Solomon." Such an anointing implied an act of reciprocal contract; Kuan, "Third Kingdoms 5.1 and Israelite-Tyrian Relations During the Reign of Solomon," *JOT* 46 (1990): 31–46.

friendly relations within treaty.³³ Victor Hurovitz states that the Hebrew phrase כל־הימים ("all the days") may denote "diplomatic parlance" comparative to treaty idioms in Akkadian such as *ultu dārīti* intended to build contractual relations.³⁴ An Amarna text uses nearly identical phraseology to 2 Kings 5:15 in a similar context concerning the secession of a king. After the coronation of an Egyptian crown-prince, the Mitanni king seeks to reconfirm the relationship over the negotiation of gifts, repeating the phrase, "Just as I always showed love to Mimmureya, your father, I will now show ten times much more love to Naphurreya."³⁵ Like Hiram, the Mitanni King generously provides exotic gifts to reinforce the covenantal bond. Significantly, this phrase repeated occurs alongside a negotiation for a gift exchange of gold statues.

The progression of dialogue in 1 Kings 5 confirms the reciprocal partnership between Solomon and Hiram. The two kings do not merely agree to the economic terms, but their one-upsmanship emphasizes the social implications of the exchange. Solomon relinquishes any negotiating leverage with his statement in 5:20:

אִין בְּנוֹ אִישׁ יָדַע לְכַרֵּת-עֵצִים כַּצְדָּנִים

There is not one among us, who can cut timber like the Sidonians.

But rather than exploiting on this admission for negotiations, Hiram generously responds with more concern for satisfying Solomon than any profit in 5:21b–23:

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לְדָוִד בֶּן חָכֵם עַל-הָעֵם הָרַב הַזֶּה... שָׁמַעְתִּי אֶת אֲשֶׁר-שָׁלַחְתָּ אֵלַי אֲנִי אֶעֱשֶׂה אֶת-כָּל-חֲפֶצֶךָ בְּעֵצֵי אֲרָזִים וּבְעֵצֵי בְרוֹשִׁים. עַבְדִּי יֵרְדוּ מִן-הַלְבָּנוֹן יִמָּה וְאֲנִי אֲשִׁימָם דְּבָרוֹת בָּיִם עַד-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-תִּשְׁלַח אֵלַי וּנְפִצְתִּים שָׁם וְאֵתָה תֵּשָׂא וְאֵתָה תַּעֲשֶׂה אֶת-חֲפְצֵי לֵתֶת לֶחֶם בֵּיתִי.

Blessed be YHWH this day that he gave to David a son of wisdom for this great people... I have heard your message for me and I, myself will do all that you desire with cedars and cypress. My servants will bring down from Lebanon towards the sea and I will set them as rafts to the place that you

³³ William L. Moran, "The Ancient Near Eastern Background of the Love of God in Deuteronomy," *CBQ* 25 (1963): 77–87.

³⁴ Victor A. Hurovitz, *I Have Built You an Exalted House: Temple Building in the Bible in Light of Mesopotamian and Northwest Semitic Writings*, (JSOTSS 115, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 176–177.

³⁵ *EA* 27:72–73.

set for me, then I will break them for you to carry. And you will give food for my household.

As Solomon merely asks for the Sidonians, subject to Tyre, to aid the men of Israel, Hiram extends the offer to cut the timber and transport them with his own servants.³⁶ He also adds a blessing to YHWH in accord to the protocol of an international agreement in blessing the foreign partner's deity.³⁷ Both sides promise extraordinary generosity from their supply. Hiram completely matches Solomon's extreme munificence along with emotional joy and impromptu blessing.³⁸ The phrase **עשה את־חפצי** ("Do (your/my) desire") serves as technical covenantal language with parallels in both Akkadian and Old Aramaic. Significantly both Hiram and Solomon appear as subjects for the phrase. Whereas Solomon asks for cedars, Hiram volunteers both cedars and cypress. The passage culminates with the unambiguous statement, "And there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them cut a covenant."³⁹ Clearly, the relationship is not purely economic in motivation.⁴⁰ Both sides attest to the mutual desire to maintain the peace between them, with economic gain as second-day. The *šulmanu* of timber and foodstuff leads to **שלום** (*šalom*) between the two polities.

Within the language of relationship, this reciprocal agreement also has formalist appeal as the Israelites and Phoenicians exchange bulk

³⁶ Possibly, Hiram wanted to suppress any notion of Solomon as the overlord to the Tyrians by delivering the timber himself despite the fact that such a journey would cover a distance of 200 miles on the sea and twenty-five miles across land rising 3,000 feet in elevation. In the Wadi-Brisa Inscription, Nebuchadnezzar boasts, "What no former king has done (I achieved): I cut through steep mountains, I split rocks, opened passages and (thus) I constructed a straight road for the (transport of) cedars. I made the Arahtu flo[at] (down) and carry to Marduk, my king, mighty cedars, high and strong, of precious beauty and of excellent dark quality, the abundant yield of the Lebanon, as (if they be) reed stalks (carried by) the river . . . I made the inhabitants of the Lebanon live in safety together and let nobody disturb them." *ANET* 307; cf. *CAD E*, 274.

³⁷ Cf. Exod 18:10.

³⁸ 1 Kgs 5:21.

³⁹ 1 Kgs 5:26. Burke Long interprets this key phrase as "a final interpretive rubric" for the relationship between Hiram and Solomon, similar to usages in Gen 21:32; Josh 24:25; 1 Kgs 20:34. Burke O. Long, *1 Kings*, (FOTL 9, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 79.

⁴⁰ Thus, Walter Brueggemann mistakenly analyzes the covenant between Hiram and Solomon as "Entry into a world of trade and commerce viewed as fundamentally alien to the covenantal identity of Israel." Walter Brueggemann, *1 and 2 Kings* (Macon, Georgia: Smyth and Helwys, 2000), 78. In fact, the reciprocal nature of the agreement defines this covenant relationship. Compare this to the portrayal of the same event in 2 Chr 2:7, which has much more of a formalist appeal.

commodities that utilize comparative advantage. Aside from the natural harbors, the Phoenicians' topographical advantage lies in their immediate access to the vast and dense cedar, cypress and pine forests of the Lebanese mountains. Shipping such cumbersome timber did not deter the negotiation due to their mastery of shipbuilding and navigation. While the Phoenician city-states had forests in abundance, they lacked suitable hinterlands to support their dense population. Thus, the rich fertile valleys of Israel supported a suitable return product in exchange for the timber. In addition, trading rights within the Gulf of Aqaba provided a beneficial opportunity for the Phoenicians, an opportunity that Solomon could not achieve without the support of the Phoenician shipbuilding. In summary, the arrangement between Solomon and Hiram has formalist economic aims in reaching marginal efficiencies, but only within a matrix of an established social relationship.⁴¹

The epilogue of the Solomon-Hiram treaty in 1 Kings 9:11–15 shows cracks in this symmetrical relationship. At this point of the narrative, Solomon begins his moral fall by violating the spirit of his long-standing reciprocal arrangement with Hiram. Tyre clearly has done its duty in providing the abundance of timber according to the earlier narration. The text, however, does not mention any provision of food for the Phoenician city-state, but rather twenty marginal towns in the land of Galilee of such low quality, that it provokes a response reminiscent of the Amarna letter petulence.⁴² According to the established rules of international reciprocity, Hiram has no choice, but to accept the gift. He then fulfills his duty and sends a large measure of gold to the Israelite king. The negotiations between Hiram and Solomon appear to have extended beyond the portrayal in the biblical texts. Solomon's initial offer of payment for cedars at some point develops into the relinquishing of cities in return for precious metals. Only now, after the stern Deuteronomic warning of 1 Kings 9:1–9,

⁴¹ In this sense, both Moshe Weinfeld and Moshe Elat fail to recognize the social nature of trade. Both relate the phrase to the Neo-Babylonian business language of *epeš šibūti*. But this term appears in earlier Old Babylonian documents, which highlight the personal relationship of trade. Also, Hurowitz argues that the term *שָׁכַר* also serves as a semantical equivalent for a fiscal term. See Hurowitz, *I Have Built You an Exalted House*, 186; cf. Moshe Weinfeld, "The Counsel of The 'Elders' To Rehoboam and Its Implications," in *Reconsidering Israel and Judah*, 516–539; Moshe Elat, *Economic Relations*, 531–532).

⁴² Avruhc, "Reciprocity, Equality, and Status-Anxiety," 162.

the narrative depicts the moral and political demise of Solomon.⁴³ The earlier agreement with Hiram suggested partnership and honor among symmetrical equals to obtain the best materials for the Jerusalem temple. Now, the two polities aggressively jostle with each other for position and material goods. The Israelite ruler of wisdom appears as a cheat and swindler, whereas the Canaanite king ironically appears with more integrity within the relationship. This behavior violates explicit command and appears counter to the egalitarian spirit of the pre-exilic community.⁴⁴

Several lines of evidence suggest a historical kernel to the Solomon / Hiram reciprocal partnership within the biblical text. Various textual sources attest to the extensive commercial activity from the Phoenician city-states surrounding the time of Solomon.⁴⁵ The Phoenician material culture appears throughout the Southern Levant during Iron Age IIA, not just along the expected borders with the Phoenician city-states. Most important for analyzing trade, several types of Phoenician pottery appear throughout the land of Israel indicating a pervasive exchange network with Israel.⁴⁶ King Hiram of Tyre is not only attested, he is a longtime contemporary of Solomon, and he instigated an economic expansion of Tyre in the wake of Egyptian and Philistine decline as well as the instability of the Aramaean states.⁴⁷ As a result, the Tyrian tenth century economic structure appears more palatial than purely entrepreneurial, much in line with Kings' portrayal of Hiram as the chief catalyst and organizer of

⁴³ Some argue that the chapters have no ominous repercussions but rather singularly focus on the glories of Solomon; Gary N. Knoppers, *Two Nations under God: The Deuteronomistic History of Solomon and the Dual Monarchies. Vol. 1, the Reign of Solomon and the Rise of Jeroboam* (HSM 52, Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1993). This is hard to accept, given that opulence and material greed were the chief concerns in the later passages as well as the Deuteronomistic warning in 1 Kgs 9:1–9.

⁴⁴ Deut 17:16–17.

⁴⁵ During the Late Bronze Age, several of Ugaritic letters refer to the Phoenician coast. The narrative Wenamun assumes major timber trade in Byblos. The Neo-Assyrian period shows a strong mercantile presence in Phoenicia. In particular, Esarhaddon draws a major treaty with Tyre.

⁴⁶ Gabriel Barkay, "The Iron Age II–III," in *The Archaeology of Ancient Israel*, 335–338; Amihai Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 536–541.

⁴⁷ Maria Eugenia Aubet, *The Phoenicians and the West: Politics, Colonies and Trade*, trans. Mary Turton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 43–46; H. Jacob Katzenstein, *The History of Tyre: From the Beginning of the Second Millenium B.C.E. until the Fall of the Neo-Babylonian Empire in 538 B.C.E.*, 2nd ed. (Jerusalem: Ben Gurion University of the Negev Press, 1997), 77–115; Glenn E. Markoe, *Phoenicians* (London: British Museum, 2000), 93–96.

long-distance trade.⁴⁸ Even the gifting of land between polities has historical precedent in Alalakh with a parallel wording to 1 Kings 5:11.⁴⁹

Some argue for a historical reality that Solomon served as a vassal under the politically superior Hiram. Maxwell Miller and John Hayes state that Solomon had nothing to contribute to a symmetrical partnership outside of access to the Gulf of Aqeba.⁵⁰ Their student, Jeffrey Kuan, suggests that the LXX may reflect an earlier textual witness that shows Hiram as a superior approaching Solomon as a potential vassal in that “Hiram had always loved (ἀγαπῶν) David.” In following the ideology of a glorious Davidic line, the MT defuses the sense of Hiram’s superiority by stating that “Hiram had always been a lover (אָהֵב) to David,” as a more symmetrical balance.⁵¹ Eric Seibert also sees several instances of subversiveness within the narrative, indicating Solomon as a vassal to Hiram.⁵² One significant example is the apology to the gifting of the land to Cabul. By declaring the land as undesirable, the DtrH attempts to molliate the outcry against Solomon giving the promised land to Canaanites.

But such a portrayal of Solomon as a vassal is unlikely. Phoenicia was not a militarily strong state and did not have the resources to coerce its neighboring polities. Although Phoenicia eventually developed a significant number of colonies throughout the Mediterranean Sea, there is no evidence that she enjoyed overlord status, but rather relied on shipbuilding in order to forge and maintain symbiotic relationships with foreign lands. Also, these arguments ignore the major need for foodstuff in accord to the lack of hinterland in the Phoenician states, a resource that Solomon

⁴⁸ This contrasts sharply to the post-exilic portrayal of Tyre. In Ezekiel 27, the Tyrian government is silent, and the prophetic oracles condemn the “Ship of Tyre.” Whereas the earlier Tyrian trade in 1 Kings 5 and 9 appear to sustain the city-state under the control and regulation (and benefit) of royal heads of state, Ezekiel 27 portrays a mercantile driven economy without any concern for social reciprocity. Instead, this post-exilic prophecy exclusively focuses on the formalist aspect of the Tyrians in their vast seafaring voyages and enormous product. The Ezekiel passage frequently uses specialized “rational” economic terms not found in the Kings passages: סַחֵר, (“trader”) (vv. 12, 16, 18, 21, 36), רֹכֵל, (“trader”) (vv. 3, 13, 15, 17, 20, 22 [2x], 23 [2x], 24), הוֹן, (“wealth”) (vv. 17, 18, 27, 33), מַעֲרָב, (“loaded wares”) (9, 13, 17, 19, 25, 27, 33, 34), עֹזְבוֹן, (“merchandise”) (12, 14, 16, 19, 22, 27, 33).

⁴⁹ F. Charles Fensham, “The Treaty between Solomon and Hiram and the Alalakh Tablets,” *JBL* 79 (1960): 59–60.

⁵⁰ James Maxwell Miller, John Haralson Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 2nd ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 208–209.

⁵¹ Kuan, “Third Kingdoms 5.1 and Israelite-Tyrian Relations,” 31–46.

⁵² Eric A. Seibert, *Subversive Scribes and the Solomonic Narrative: A Rereading of 1 Kings 1–11* (New York: T & T Clark, 2006).

could provide, though likely not of the biblical portions. Considering this, a historical symmetrical agreement based on reciprocity between Solomon and Hiram is quite plausible. Accordingly, a redactor most logically inserted a source for the 1 Kings 5 narrative during the pre-exilic layer of the DtrH. The unmistakable covenant language surrounding the reciprocal partnership is Deuteronomic.⁵³ Although Noth indentified this narrative as a fully exilic literary creation, this does not account for the pro-monarchic sentiment of the Davidic line deeply integrated with the importance of the Jerusalem temple.⁵⁴ Such a positive portrayal of Solomon fits better with pre-exilic settings, particularly with the portrayal of palatial trade. Regardless of the historical circumstances, the DtrH portrays Israel and Tyre as individually powerful and symmetrically-balanced polities. This portrayal harmonizes well with the pre-exilic Deuteronomic ideology of the United Monarchy, though one cannot confidently distinguish between Hezekian or Josianic layers for this episode.

The continuation to the Hiram narrative in 1 Kings 9:11–14 is more complex. It reflects a pre-exilic emphasis on the Solomonic glory, but its insertion at this point creates a different message. After Deuteronomic warning (vv.1–9) and a historical recap (v.10), 1 Kings 9:11 abruptly begins to discuss the Hiram treaty and some of Solomon's unfaithfulness to his partner. This negative insertion matches the exilic concern to explain the downfall of the Davidic dynasty with its long-standing apostasy that goes back to Solomon. Not only does Solomon violate the agreement, he also gives away part of the promised land.⁵⁵ Although not directly critical of Solomon, this insertion comes as a harbinger to the future fall of the United Monarchy, in congruence with the Deuteronomic warnings of 9:1–9. In addition, the emphasis on material good no longer benefits the glory of YHWH as in 5:15–32, but instead now benefits Solomon's treasuries. This ideology matches the exilic critique of Solomon's oppressive means to gaining wealth. Thus, this insertion, though arising from a pre-exilic source, appears to have been reworked into the longer Deuteronomic narrative during a time of exile, when the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the Davidic line required explanation. Whereas verses 11–13 appear as one unit, the addition of verse 14, "And Hiram sent to Solomon 120 talents of gold" is a bit puzzling. For this reasons, some interpreters prefer to see

⁵³ 1 Kgs 5:17–19, 21, 26a.

⁵⁴ Noth, *Könige*, 88.

⁵⁵ The Chronicler shows Solomon receiving the land from Hiram; 2 Chr 8:1–2.

this section as pro-Solomonic, and not part of the exilic redaction.⁵⁶ A more sensible solution, however, is to see this as a Persian period insertion. Normally, the redactional element “to this day” tends to close off textual insertions, thus isolating verse 14 as a separate addition.⁵⁷ During the post-exilic projection of the glories of Solomon, the insertion of a large payment from Hiram helps to balance the negativity surrounding Solomon during this time.

But regardless of the historicity behind the narrative, the text describes the relationship between Solomon and Hiram by using language and tone that largely matches the kinship theme of the Amarna letters. The outward language is often inclusive, honorific and deferential, presuming the existence and desire to maintain social standing with each other. The biblical text also displays subtle or outright contention over position and ultimately material possession. The Solomon—Hiram correspondence does not intend to place the United Monarchy in the midst of the Late Bronze Age world, but it does appear to deliberately invoke the portrayals of an economically and politically powerful entity.

3.2.b. *King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba*

No sooner does Solomon renege the symmetrical arrangements with Tyre, he builds a new relationship with the Queen of Sheba. But instead of balanced reciprocity as with Hiram, the interaction with Sheba now portrays Solomon as an overlord and Sheba as his vassal. Thus, the gift exchange is no longer horizontal, but rather vertical. Anthropologists have long recognized the social significance of vertical reciprocity. Yan writes, “Given the implications of inequality and hierarchy that are inherent to most cases of vertical gift giving, a unilateral and downward flow of gifts often plays an important role in the formation of political authority and power.”⁵⁸ The Sheba narrative fits such vertical reciprocity on several accounts. First, Sheba gives great obeisance to Solomon and recognizes his deity, without any mention of a commensurate act. Second, the magnitude of Sheba’s gift impresses the reader with the vast riches coming to Jerusalem. The text continually emphasizes the enormity of Sheba’s belongings

⁵⁶ Knoppers, *Two Nations under God*.

⁵⁷ Brevard S. Childs, “A Study of the Formula ‘until This Day,’” *JBL* 82 (1963): 279–292; Jeffrey C. Geoghegan, “‘Until This Day’ And the Preexilic Redaction of the Deuteronomistic History,” *JBL* 122 (1992): 201–227.

⁵⁸ Yunxiang Yan, “The Gift and Gift Economy,” 247. Much of Yan’s general theories arise from his study of marriage gifting within Chinese communities.

throughout the pericope: with a large retinue, great quantity of gold, and the gift to Solomon of 120 talents of gold, spices and precious stones—an amount the narrator specifies is “never equaled” in Israelite history.⁵⁹ Third, through the mental challenges, Solomon displays himself as the intellectually superior and thus worthy of such tribute. Sheba intends to test the rumors of Solomon’s wisdom, a test whose outcome is never in doubt. Fourth, the placement of the Sheba narrative within chapters nine and ten, and the insertion of the Hiram epilogue in the middle of the story both carry the common theme of Solomon receiving vast riches from the ends of the ancient Near East.

But unlike the balanced reciprocity with Hiram, the Queen of Sheba pericope displays Solomon as a unilaterally powerful and authoritative monarch even against the powerful, distant and mysterious polity. Solomon ends up with this vast quantity of material luxuries. Sheba presumably receives a large portion as well in that she gets “all of her desire.”⁶⁰ But even this phrase plays on the word to attest to superiority of Solomon over the Queen of Sheba. The foreign queen recognizes that the Lord has given Solomon much riches according to **חפץ בך** (“your [Solomon’s] desire”). In accord, Solomon can now displace these riches down to other polities according to **כל-הפצה** (“her desire”). Solomon is a step closer to deity than the Queen of Sheba. His blessing comes straight from the heavens, whereas other polities depend on their relationship with Solomon. Sheba’s response appropriately recognizes the superiority of the king of Israel. Long observes the noteworthy speech genres in this passage.⁶¹ The living eulogy of praise fits other ancient Near Eastern examples of courtiers approving of the monarchs. Second, the v. 8 phrase:

אשרי אנשיך אשרי עבדיך אלה

Blessed be your men and blessed be these servants.

This phrase offers a special praise to the person, who receives divine blessing. These speech forms contribute to the portrayal of Solomon’s greatness.⁶² Within the context, the queen appropriately responds with lavish gifts.

⁵⁹ 1 Kgs 10:10.

⁶⁰ 1 Kgs 10:13.

⁶¹ Long, *1 Kings*, 119.

⁶² Cf. Ps 1:1; 2:12; Prov 8:34; 16:20b; Deut 33:29; Isa 30:18b; Job 5:17; Long, *1 Kings*, 119.

But this economic exchange is still reciprocity and not tribute. The text emphasizes the beginning of a relationship between Solomon and Sheba. The laconic text of 1 Kings 10:1–13 contains subtle in the relational aspects between the two monarchs that later Jewish, Islamic and Christian traditions explicitly interpret the encounter as sexual in nature. Although the exchange is asymmetrical, it makes no mention of military consequences. Rather the social relationship between Solomon and Sheba, the surrounding literary context of 1 Kings 10:1–10, 13 presumably allows for the exploitation of Solomon into Ezion-Geber now that he has safe passageway to the Arabian Peninsula. The insertion of Hiram's joint venture in 1 Kings 11–12 and the detailed listing of 10:14–29 support the enormous material wealth of Solomon through these reciprocal measures.

Dating the Sheba episode has many difficulties, reflected in the wide opinions from pre-exilic to exilic to Persian.⁶³ None of the linguistic evidence has any definitive weight in dating and thus, judiciously cautious must precede any opinion.⁶⁴ An examination of the pericope itself appears to reflect a Persian composition. The incident with Sheba has all the characteristics of a legendary tale: foreign queen, exotic riches and an intellectual contest with Solomon emerging as the undisputed victor. These characteristics are consistent with the post-exilic presentation of a glorious Solomonic age, particularly with the emphasis on wisdom. Furthermore, the Sheba narrative sits between other pericopes that emphasize the grandeur and fortune of Solomon. The difficulty in finding the historical source for this visit may point its legendary nature.⁶⁵ Whereas

⁶³ Pre-exilic datings include Gray, *I & II Kings*, 257–262; Sweeney, *1 and 2 Kings*, 149; Brian Peckham, *The Composition of the Deuteronomistic History* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985) argues for exilic dating. Post-exilic dates include Römer, *The So-Called Deuteronomistic History*, 151. Interestingly, Noth dates this episode to an exilic layer as a component of his unified DtrH hypothesis, but later makes it pre-exilic in his unfinished commentary to Kings; see Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History*; Noth, *Könige*, 203–204.

⁶⁴ Possible pre-exilic clues to the Kings text include: (1) the use of אֵל with the verb רָבַד, which is less frequent in Late Biblical Hebrew, and almost missing entirely at Qumran in non-biblical texts; (2) the definite article in front of חֲצִי. Post-exilic clues include the finite use of the participle in v.1 and the phrase רַב מְאֹד, “much abundance” which occurs most frequently in Ezekiel (37:2; 47:7; 47:9; 47:10) and Chronicles (1 Chr 18:18; 2 Chr 9:9; 24:24; 30:13; 32:29). See Angel Sáenz-Badillos, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, trans. John Elwolde (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 129.

⁶⁵ Most interpreters, beginning with Josephus, place the historical location of Sheba in Ethiopia or the south Arabian kingdom of Saba. For arguments on the identification with Ethiopia, see Kenneth A. Kitchen, “Egypt and East Africa,” in *The Age of Solomon: Scholarship at the Turn of Millennium*, ed. Lowell Handy (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 106–125; Amélie Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East*, 2 vols. (London: Routledge, 1995), 191–193; Edward

the reciprocal partnership with Hiram likely reflects the contemporary polity-to-polity interaction, the lengthy journey by royalty and the episode of riddles and unbridled hyperbole all point to this Sheba account as a literary creation during an age far removed from the actual United Monarchy. In addition, if this passage is earlier than the Persian period, one wonders why the Chronicler's version would not include the phrase "by the name of the Lord" considering the development of name theology in Chronicles.⁶⁶ Therefore, the movement of tribute to Solomon likely originates as a post-exilic projection rather than directly reflecting of any economic reality of the pre-exilic period.

3.2.c. *Hezekiah and Merodach-Baladan*

An additional polity-to-polity reciprocal exchange warrants brief mention. In 2 Kings 20:12–15 (cf. Isaiah 39:1–4), the king of Babylon, Merodach-Baladan, sends a gift alongside official letters to Hezekiah. Although the narrative explicitly states that the latter's sickness compels the Babylonian ruler to send the gift, the overall effect of the exchange is to strengthen not the Judaeen king, but rather his commitment to an alliance with Babylon. The response of Hezekiah shows an effort to prove Judah's worth as an equal reciprocal partner with Babylon for a joint revolt to break apart Assyrian hegemony. Hezekiah does so by showing the vast storehouses of wealth to the envoy and the ensuing rebuke from Isaiah. Consistent with Akkadian cognates, the use of the term *בית נכטה* ("storehouse") demonstrates the great wealth of Hezekiah.⁶⁷ The ostentatious display from Hezekiah signals the entry of Isaiah to bring a prophecy of condemnation to the Davidic line by the hands of Babylon. As a result, the envoy presents Hezekiah with a gift, but interestingly, the text makes no mention of any reciprocating gift to the Babylonian envoy.

Ullendorff, "The Queen of Sheba in Ethiopian Tradition," in *Solomon and Sheba*, ed. James B. Pritchard (London: Paidon, 1974), 104–114; Gus W. Van Beek, "The Land of Sheba," in *Solomon and Sheba*, ed. James B. Pritchard (London: Paidon, 1974), 40–63. For arguments towards the South Arabian kingdom of Saba, see Van Beek, "The Land of Sheba,"; Kenneth A. Kitchen, "Sheba and Arabia," in *The Age of Solomon*, 126–153.

⁶⁶ William M. Schniedewind, "The Evolution of Name Theology," in *The Chronicler as Theologian: Essays in Honor of Ralph Klein*, eds. Patrick M. Graham, Steven McKenzie and Gary Knoppers (New York: Continuum, 2003), 228–239.

⁶⁷ The Akkadian cognate *bit nakamtu* often refers to the vast storehouses commensurate to the magnitude of a king's greatness; *CAD N Part I*, 182.

The passage of the gifts to Hezekiah in 2 Kings 20:12–15 is a redactionally complex text. Like the Hiram narrative, this section likely derives from a pre-exilic source but enters into the DtrH in a much later time. The text refers to an actual Babylonian ruler, Merodach-Baladan (Marduk-apal-idinna), roughly contemporary with Hezekiah during the time of any alliance against Assyrian threat.⁶⁸ Several scholars have noted the priority of the Kings version to the Isaiah version.⁶⁹ Verses 12–13 falls well within the ideology of a pre-exilic DtrH, except for the כִּי insertion of Hezekiah's sickness in 12b.⁷⁰ But the negative interaction with Isaiah hardly befits a pre-exilic ideology of the Davidic ruler. The abrupt movement to Isaiah and the knowledge of Babylonian destruction make this appear as a later insertion, whether as an exilic or post-exilic *vaticinium ex eventu*.⁷¹ The later DtrH editor used mechanism of reciprocal exchange for an ironic statement on the downfall of Judah. In the glorious past, Babylon and Judah were symmetrical partners, but because of disobedience, the nation is relegated to one-way tribute to their foreign masters.

Therefore, Kings portrays reciprocity as a pervasive economic mechanism for the interaction between the Davidic monarchy and foreign polities. In all of the examples: Hiram of Tyre, the Queen of Sheba and Medoch-Baladan of Babylon, the exchange mechanism functions as a narrative tool. This mode of exchange becomes a device for material good, and increased social standing. But unlike many romantic visions of a utopian past, the polite reciprocal language underlies a deeper desire for material good, at least partially compatible with *homo economicus*. A continued review of reciprocity at the non-royal level will reveal a similar blend of substantivist and formalist motives for exchange.

⁶⁸ Jan A. Brinkman, "Merodach-Baladan II," in *Studies Presented to A. Leo Oppenheim* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 31–35.

⁶⁹ The primary difference between the two accounts in the opening statement, whereas Kings reads וישמע ("Listen!") the Isaiah text begins with וישמח ("Rejoice!") The admonition to "listen" fits better in the context of delivering a long distance gift. Cf. 1 Kgs 15:16–20; 2 Kgs 16:5–9. The LXX, Vulgate and Syriac correspond to the Isaiah reading also at 2 Kings 20:13, and Targum Jonathan uses the MT; Christopher T. Begg, "The Reading at 2 Kings XX 13," *VT* 36 (1986): 339–341; A.B. Ehrlich, *Randglossen zur Hebräischen Bibel IV* (Leipzig 1912), 151.

⁷⁰ The original intent of Medoch-Baladan was likely the development of a relationship. Possibly referring to this incident, Josephus writes, "The king of Babylon sent envoys to Hezekiah and invited him to become his ally and friend." *Antiquities*, X. 30.

⁷¹ Fritz, *1 and 2 Kings* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 383–384.

3.3. *Non-elite Reciprocity*

Epigraphic evidence for Levantine exchange corresponds almost exclusively to royal power, yet this elite reciprocity represents just a limited portion of economic transactions in ancient Israel. The cultural expectations regarding gift exchange certainly trickled to all levels of society, but unfortunately, much of this non-elite reciprocal exchange does not leave any sort of archaeological footprint.

With the lack of material remains, one can turn to modern ethno-anthropological observations to recognize the pervasiveness of non-elite reciprocity in Middle Eastern culture. Henry Rosenfeld's case-study on a small Arab village in the Lower Galilee begins, "Reciprocal behavior pervaded most areas of daily life in Arab peasant society in Palestine."⁷² Reciprocal exchange plays an important role in the vital function of honor and shame, according to several landmark studies on Mediterranean honor and shame from the 1960s.⁷³ Despite the vast social and cultural differences between ancient Israel and a twentieth century Arabic village, several parallels may help to inform the examination of non-elite gifting within 1 and 2 Kings.⁷⁴ Gifting is socially bound. Thus, regardless of the position within hierarchy, one will utilize gifting, though often with utilitarian concerns. One natural difference from royal gifting is the material value of the gift. Due to lack of material resources, non-elite gifting involves more mundane products than high-end luxury goods that typically characterize the Amarna and Solomonic reciprocity. But within a peasant village, a pig or

⁷² The quote continues, "'Generalized' and 'balanced' reciprocity, along with 'negative' reciprocity, and what Firth says about his Tikopia evidence, that it 'fully bears out Mauss's emphasis upon the triple significance of the obligation to give, the obligation to receive and the obligation to repay', still hold true for Arab villagers." Henry Rosenfeld, "Non-Hierarchical, Hierarchical and Masked Reciprocity in an Arab Village," *Anthropological Quarterly* 47 (1974), 139.

⁷³ Julio Caro Baroja, "Honour and Shame: An Historical Account of Several Conflicts," in *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society*, ed. John G. Peristiany (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965), 79–138; John Campbell, *Honour, Family, and Patronage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964); Julian Pitt-Rivers, "Honour and Social Status," in *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society*, ed. John G. Peristiany (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965), 19–78. Also see analysis of this movement by Stanley Brandes, "Reflections on Honor and Shame," in *Honor and Shame and the Unity of the Mediterranean*, ed. David D. Gilmore (Washington D.C.: The American Anthropological Association, 1987), 121–134.

⁷⁴ For a summary on the relatively nascent field of modern Middle Eastern economic anthropology, see Julia Elyacher, "The Near East," in *A Handbook of Economic Anthropology*, 515–525.

provision of a meal may have similar relative value to its owner as many talents of gold to a polity leader.

The non-elite reciprocity within the text of Kings has a much more socially diverse network of prestation, from polity rulers to materially disenfranchised widows. This individual reciprocity almost always involves a non-royal prophet as a potential patron of a gift. The prophetic voice accuses the government of social and religious abuses, and therefore they must subsist outside of royal sponsorship. Socially ostracized and materially poor, these itinerant prophets rely on reciprocal exchanges for their prophetic services. The exclusivity to prophets in individual reciprocity reflects their special role within the book of Kings.⁷⁵ Reciprocity serves as a powerful mechanism to further highlight and proclaim the prophetic message. Indeed, in examining the individual reciprocity in biblical texts, it appears that even in the ancient Near East, there was no such thing as a free gift.

3.3.a. *Refusing Reciprocity to Subvert*

Throughout the Hebrew Bible, failed reciprocity functions as a significant literary device to portray dynamics of honor and shame. Reciprocal exchange can define social boundaries and adjust levels of power. Accordingly, the biblical compilers utilize reciprocal acts in developing the ideology within narrative texts. In a study on hospitality, Victor Matthews identifies narratives of reciprocal hospitality that does not follow expected protocol (Gen 19:1–11; Judg 4:17–22; 19:1–25).⁷⁶ In each of these examples, the failure to follow proper reciprocal protocol contributes to the tension and portends the ominous endings to each of these narratives.

Portrayals of failed reciprocity in Kings frequently overturn expected social norms. Specifically, the prophets refuse gifts and hospitality to avoid burdens that can potentially mitigate against the prophetic message. This appears most dramatically in the account of King Jeroboam and the man-of-God in 1 Kings 13:1–10. In typically laconic form, the man-of-God

⁷⁵ Certainly, non-prophetic individuals, extended households and tribes participated in reciprocal exchange, particularly in rites of passages: birth, circumcision, marriage and death. But the rituals accompanying these events did not warrant contribution to the ideology of the DtrH, thus the concomitant economic activities are not recorded in 1 and 2 Kings.

⁷⁶ As a foil, Victor H. Matthews presents two examples of proper reciprocal hospitality: Gen 18:1–10; 24:19–41; Matthews, “Hospitality and Hostility in Judges 4,” *BTB* 21 (1991): 13–21; Matthews, “Hospitality and Hostility in Genesis 19 and Judges 19,” *BTB* 22 (1992): 3–11.

begins as the object of Jeroboam's arrest order, but upon administering and removing the curse, he receives an invitation to the palace and the request, "Let me give you a gift."⁷⁷ Jeroboam attempts to bring a social obligation to the prophet through gifting. But rather than accept, the man-of-God scorns the offering, proclaiming, "Even if you give me half your wealth, I will not go in with you, nor will I eat bread or drink water in this place." Material gift was not as important as maintaining a sense of honor and at the same time, ascribing shame to the king. Commentators have interpreted this puzzling rejection of fraternization with the king in many different ways. John Skinner cited the issue of physical safety and the need to avoid pursuit.⁷⁸ John Gray saw the prohibition as a precautionary measure to avoid molestation.⁷⁹ Noth, Jerome Walsh and Mordechai Cogan all suggest that fraternization involves some form of condoning of the city's abominations, and weakening the prophetic word.⁸⁰ Iain Provan asserts that the refusal will offer protection from bribery.⁸¹ Pamela Reis identifies the perceived rejection as the opening stages of negotiation appropriate for an honor—shame society.⁸² As an interpreter familiar with ancient Near Eastern customs, Josephus may have the most accurate understanding in that the offering and rejection of provision is a manner of honor.⁸³ Rather than optimize material gain, the prophet does not want to engage with the king, thus creating a social obligation. The foreign (Judaean) origin of the unnamed prophet highlights the rejection of the social bond. Within the larger unit of 1 Kings 12:25–13:34 enveloped by the *Wiederaufnahme* **לחטאת ויהי הדבר הזה** ("And this cause for guilt came to pass") the prophetic refusal of the gift functions as the symbolic act of condemnation against Jeroboam's cultic activity.⁸⁴

⁷⁷ The king announces his intentions with "Let me sustain (you)" (**וְסַעֲדָה** v. 7). The root **סַעַד** appears to function as standard reciprocity language in the DtrH; cf. Gen 18:5; Judg 19:5, 8).

⁷⁸ John Skinner, *Kings* (New York: H Frowde, Oxford University Press, 1904).

⁷⁹ Gray, *I & II Kings*, 320–322.

⁸⁰ Noth, *Könige*, 298; Brueggemann, *1 and 2 Kings*, 167–176; Jerome T. Walsh, *1 Kings* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 1996), 171–181; Mordechai Cogan, *1 Kings: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 10, New York: Doubleday, 2001), 369.

⁸¹ Iain W. Provan, *Hezekiah and the Books of Kings: A Contribution to the Debate About the Composition of the Deuteronomistic History* (BZAW 172, Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1988), 78–89.

⁸² Cf. Gen 23:4–16; Num 12:18; 2 Sam 24:21–24. See Pamela Tamarkin Reis, *Reading the Lines: A Fresh Look at the Hebrew Bible* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2002), 197–210.

⁸³ Cogan reports this interpretation; *1 Kings*, 369; *Ant.* 8.236.

⁸⁴ D.W. van Winkle, "1 Kings XII 25–XIII 34: Jeroboam's Cultic Innovations and the Man of God from Judah," *VT* 46 (1996): 102–103.

The second part to this narrative of 1 Kings 13:11–32 further underscores the social bond of the gift, though with a drastically different ethical action for the man-of-God. Although he defiantly refuses the gifting from King Jeroboam, the Bethel prophet, with a little persuasion, convinces the man-of-God to accept the gift of hospitality. This gift acceptance creates an immediate outcome. By accepting the gift from the Bethel prophet, YHWH immediately admonishes the man-of-God, “Your corpse will not enter the tomb of your fathers.”⁸⁵ A lion subsequently kills the man-of-God, leaving an unburied corpse. The accepting of a gift creates a social identity and a concomitant burden, thus a legitimate Judaeen prophet of YHWH has no reason to accept a gift from a rival sanctuary in Bethel. But just as YHWH ostracizes the prophet from his social community, he effectively enters a new prophetic network in Bethel. Upon hearing this news, the Bethel prophet finds the corpse, returns it to the city, then buries the body in his own grave by referring to the Judaeen prophet in the kinship term of *’אח* (“my brother.”)⁸⁶ As this story serves as literary foreshadowing for the discovery of the tomb of the Judaeen prophet in 2 Kings 23:15–18, the DtrH can only explain the burial in Bethel through a deliberate act of grafting the Judaeen prophet into the northern prophetic network. The gift of hospitality from the Bethel prophet to the Judaeen prophet formalizes this bond. The transfer was economically immaterial, but had profound social implications.

The prophet Ahijah also uses reciprocity to subvert power structures by rejecting the gift of Jeroboam’s wife in 1 Kings 14:1–3. Significantly, Jeroboam first tells his wife to disguise herself so as not to betray the identity of the royal giver.⁸⁷ This subterfuge demonstrates that the prophet did not operate under the *homo economicus* principle of maximizing, but rather the prophet cares about the social relationship with the potential reciprocal partner. On royal command, Jeroboam’s wife brings ten loaves, some wafer-cakes and honey to inquire about their sick son.⁸⁸ Such an offering does not intend to manipulate but rather follows established custom.⁸⁹ But rather than prophesy about the boy, Ahijah proceeds to portend the

⁸⁵ 1 Kgs 13:22.

⁸⁶ “And he set his corpse in his own tomb and mourned over it, ‘Woe my brother!’ And after he buried it, he said to his sons, “When I die, you shall bury me in the tomb in which the man-of-God is buried; set my bones by his bones.” 1 Kgs 13:30–31.

⁸⁷ 1 Kgs 14:1.

⁸⁸ Clearly, honey is not a delicacy within this context; see two other uses in Josh 9:5, 12.

⁸⁹ Cogan, 1 Kings, 369.

condemnation and impending destruction. Thus, the wife leaves without transferring the gift, and Ahijah remains free of any social obligation, and he freely speaks his message of condemnation.

The opening phrase **בַּעַת הַהִיא** (“at this time”) in 1 Kings 14:1 correlates the Ahijah narrative with the man-of-God narrative in 1 Kings 13. Both instances have implicit expectation of reciprocal payment for prophetic services in line with the created social bond.⁹⁰ Jeroboam or one from his household offers a gift, but only receives rejection. The lack of any transfer of goods allows for the prophetic message to come unadulterated. Thus, the prophets lose material payment, but maintain their honor by refusing to associate with the doomed king.

Similar to the man-of-God, Elisha also rejects gifting from the Aramaean King Ben-Hadad for the sake of maintaining integrity as a prophet of YHWH. Both instances involve reciprocal acts outside of the kin structure, thereby requiring greater value of gift. Whereas reciprocity involves exchange within social-embedded structure, those outside of the immediate or national kin structure had to overly compensate their acts of reciprocity. Social scientists have acknowledged this phenomenon under different headings. For Sahlins, the “social distance” between the two units necessitates the increase in gift.⁹¹ Such gifting outside kinship boundaries demands more than “generalized reciprocity,” a purer form of gifting within kinship bounds.⁹² Stegemann and Stegemann see such exchange as asymmetrical exchange in both in the actors (someone needs something from the other, thus creating a power differential) as well as the gift.⁹³

In the first example in 2 Kings 5:8–27, the king of Aram is desperate for prophetic healing, so he turns to the Samaritan prophet, Elisha. Within this context of social distance, the foreign ruler tries to overcompensate by preparing an exorbitant amount of gift: ten talents of silver, 6,000 shekels of gold and ten changes of clothing. Desperation does not account for the enormity of the gift, but rather, the foreign king’s offering requires abundance because the source of prophecy stood outside the kinship structure of the Aramaean kingdom. Thus, the social distance necessitates extra compensation, and the king and his commander are willing to lower themselves to obtain prophetic services. The response of the potential

⁹⁰ 1 Sam 9:6–8.

⁹¹ Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics*, 191.

⁹² Crook, “Reciprocity—Covenantal Exchange as a Test Case,” 79.

⁹³ Crook, “Reciprocity—Covenantal Exchange as a Test Case,” 82; Stegemann and Stegemann, *The Jesus Movement*.

recipient reveals much about ancient reciprocity. Upon receiving the gift, the king was quite distressed at this bind. Understanding the social ramifications, the Israelite king had two difficult choices: (1) accept the gift and thus be obligated to cure leprosy; or (2) deny the gift, shaming and thus provoking the Aramaean king and his military general! Considering the comparative evidence from Amarna, the Israelite king may not have seriously considered the second option. Ben-Hadad sends enormous gifts, but Elisha proceeds to reject both the request and the material compensation with the statement:

חַי־יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר-עִמָּדַי לִפְנֵי אִם-אֶקַּח

‘As the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will accept nothing.’⁹⁴

By this rejection, Elisha maintains his integrity, and at the same time, refuses a social bond to the politically powerful Ben-Hadad, even for an exorbitant sum. The Lord’s servant has no desire to enter in a relationship that may jeopardize the integrity of the prophetic message against the foreigner. As a result, instead of giving a gift, Ben-Hadad becomes the recipient of a de facto gift of an amount of earth, presumably to build an altar to YHWH back in Damascus.⁹⁵

The epilogue to this meeting shows the paradigm of substantivist economics in the face of *homo economicus*. In this passage, after rejecting the gift from Na’aman, one of Elisha’s disciples goes after the Aramaean to obtain some material compensation, which the general readily gives. Instead of receiving customary bread and water, Gehazi receives two talents of silver and two changes of clothing. Later when Gehazi reports this to Elisha, presumably with the expectation of commendation, Elisha gives a stunning response in 2 Kings 5:26:

הֲעַתְּ לִקְחַת אֶת-הַכֶּסֶף וְלִקְחַת בְּגָדִים וְזֵיתִים וְכֶרֶםִּים וְצֹאֵן וּבָקָר וְעִבְדִּים וְשִׁפְחוֹת:

Is this a time to accept silver and to accept clothes and olives groves and vineyards and sheep and cattle and male and female slaves?

Elisha’s response not only confronts the presumed economic intentions of his wayward disciple, but it also portrays an underlying paradigm behind the economic structure of the prophet. Tradable commodities such as

⁹⁴ 2 Kgs 5:16.

⁹⁵ 2 Kgs 5:17–18.

silver, olives groves and livestock are not befitting for the prophetic life. Elisha rejects accumulation with the understanding that the individual patrons would provide basic sustenance. In economic anthropological terms, Gehazi wants to embrace maximizing-behavior, but by doing so, he ascribes honor to Na'aman by acceptance into the social community. But Elisha, acting under principles of prestige and tradition, does not want any part of this maximizing behavior.

A second example of rejected reciprocity between Ben-Hadad and Elisha occurs in 2 Kings 8:7–11, the act of reciprocity outside of the tribal structure requires an exorbitant amount. In response to his father's command to take a gift, Hazael brought forty camel loads of bounty to Elisha for prophetic services.⁹⁶ Again, this exaggeration in material compensation signifies the necessary amount for establishing reciprocity outside of the kinship structure. The irony is obvious as this disenfranchised prophet arrives into the capital city of Damascus, and the Aramaean king treats him like a polity equal. Not only is the gift enormous, but Hazael, as a royal prince, and soon-to-be-king, uses deferential language by referring to his father with phrases like בֶּן־הַדָּד בֶּןךָ ("Your son Ben-Hadad"), עַבְדְּךָ ("your servant") and even the self-deprecating title הַכֶּלֶב ("dog.") Such language highlights the importance of social connection in ancient Israelite reciprocity. Because such exchange occurs within community, any perceived social distance requires much greater material compensation. In this case, the rejection is not explicit, but certainly implied in that the prophet did not have any social bond and the prophet word of Ben-Hadad's doom came forth.

In all of the above passages, none of these prophets operate under the conditions of *homo economicus* as described by classical formalist economists. When presented with the opportunity to gain material goods, they reject the offer in order to maintain their own honor. They rely on YHWH to provide for them, thus enabling the prophets to reject material compensation and the concomitant association with outsiders.⁹⁷ These

⁹⁶ The term for מְנַחָה ("bounty") most often refers to an offering, but also encompasses instances of treaty (Judg 3:15; 2 Sam 8:2; 1 Kgs 5:1; 2 Kgs 17:3; Hos 10:6) and gift (Gen 32:14; 33:10; 43:11; Judg 6:18; 1 Sam 10:27; 1 Kgs 10:25; 2 Kgs 20:12) without any cultic implications. Sweeney, *1 and 2 Kings*, 318.

⁹⁷ Other passages explicitly state that YHWH will provide for these prophets to allow them to reject any material compensation from willing clients. 1 Kgs 17:1–6 assumes such a mechanism to insure the sustenance of the prophet. The Lord quells Elijah's presumed concern over basic sustenance by declaring that the ravens will provide bread and the wadi will provide water. In commissioning Elijah to move east of the Jordan, the text

prophets refuse to socially engage the objects of their doom. Much like the Trobriand participants in the *Kula* ring, the prophets act rationally, but with rationality conditioned to their own culture.

Also, these prophets act outside the prescribed bounds of international gift-giving in that they *refuse* gifts. In the Amarna corpus, the polity leaders frequently express their own displeasure with quality and quantity of gifts, but they act under the social force of absolute acceptance. The Israelite king acts in a similar manner to the Aramaean gift from Hazael and thus creates a potentially disastrous obligation. But these prophets, in accordance with their anti-social behavior, refuse these acts of reciprocity. Such refusal perplexes both the giver as well as the prophetic community. Consider the surprise of Ben-Hadad to the point that he exhorts to the prophet:

ועתה קח־נא ברכה מאת עבדך

Now, please accept a gift from your servant.⁹⁸

As well as Elisha's servant who exclaims:

אדני את־נעמן הארמי הזה מקחת מידו את אשר־הביא

My master has let that Aramean Naaman off without accepting what he brought!⁹⁹

Yet in each of the above examples, such refusal of a reciprocal gift subverts the potential gifter and maintains the prophetic message.

3.3.b. *Offering Reciprocity to Empower*

Just as reciprocal exchange can subvert authority, it also serves to empower the disenfranchised. In 1 Kings 17:8–15, Elijah comes to Zarephath, south of Sidon, hungry and presumably tired. Unlike the previous three passages, instead of being offered a gift, Elijah directly asks for provision from a widow according to the command of the Lord. In her study on hospitality, Rebecca Wright identifies several components of a hospitality request in this narrative. First, Elijah uses deferential language in the requested items

anticipates the likely concern of the prophet. The legend of the ax head in 2 Kgs 6:1–7 provides an interesting commentary of the 2 Kgs 5 incident. The prophets are not subject to fraternization with rulers as the Lord will provide for them. Sweeney points out the structural contact between these two episodes; Sweeney, *1 and 2 Kings*, 295–296.

⁹⁸ 2 Kgs 5:15.

⁹⁹ 2 Kgs 5:20.

of מעט-מים ("little water") and פת-לחם ("morsel of bread").¹⁰⁰ Wright recognizes these exact same terms in the hospitality episode with Abraham in Genesis 18. She determines that the usage of מים and לחם in exaggerated small quantities occurs in deferential situations.¹⁰¹ Second, Elijah uses the honorific particle נא form twice.¹⁰² By inviting the widow to provide water, bread and a small cake, Elijah invites her into a social bond. Even when the widow politely informs the prophet of her destitution, Elijah assuages her anxieties and coaxes her to provide hospitality.

Of course, Elijah accepts the gift and by reciprocating through prophetic work, Elijah completes the symmetrical cycle. In a landmark study on Mediterranean honor and shame, Pitt-Rivers sheds light on social ramifications of the exchange between the empowered prophet and the marginalized widow, "To receive protection from someone not recognized as a superior is humiliating, but from the moment that protection is accepted, superiority is admitted, and it is no longer humiliating to serve such a person."¹⁰³ The prophetic act empowers the widow and creates a social bond that further benefits her. He revives her sick son and restores future provision. Rather than denying honor as he did to royalty and their officials, Elijah uses reciprocity to initiate a relationship and empower the disenfranchised Phoenician widow. The juxtaposition of this text with the rejection of gifting in 1 Kings 13–14 highlights this generous act.

The movement of gifting from female to male is particularly striking. In the Hebrew Bible, women generally do not have the authority to offer hospitality or other reciprocal gifts.¹⁰⁴ Similarly, ethnographic studies of Middle Eastern village reciprocity suggest that women typically only give reciprocal gifts during specific rites of passages (birth, marriage, death) and only to express joy or sorrow.¹⁰⁵ Unlike their male counterparts, women rarely participate in reciprocity in a way that they may contend for social position. Even more significant, since Arab peasant women tend have limited power and material resource, any active reciprocity is restricted to equal or subordinate male relatives, i.e. brothers and nephews.¹⁰⁶ With this

¹⁰⁰ Elijah also uses the same term for cake (עגה קטנה) that Abraham provided for hosting divine visitors; Gen 18:6.

¹⁰¹ Rebecca Abts Wright, "Establishing Hospitality in the Old Testament" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1989), 117–122, 127.

¹⁰² 1 Kgs 17:10–11.

¹⁰³ Pitt-Rivers, "Honour and Social Status," 58.

¹⁰⁴ Matthews, "Hospitality and Hostility in Judges 4."

¹⁰⁵ Rosenfeld, "Non-Hierarchical, Hierarchical and Masked Reciprocity," 149.

¹⁰⁶ Rosenfeld, "Non-Hierarchical, Hierarchical and Masked Reciprocity," 161.

background, the invitation from Elijah to a Canaanite woman becomes an empowering act! The wider literary perspective shows Elijah rejecting the powerful Israelite king, but accepting an impoverished foreign widow who acknowledged YHWH.

3.3.c. *Non-Elite Reciprocity as Informal Economy*

Aspects of the informal economy can provide a theoretical framework for understanding non-elite reciprocal exchange. Many of the above activities fall outside the official policy and tracking of the ancient Israelite royals. Within these passages, one can observe the establishment of reciprocity as an unofficial measure to account for the deficiencies of the social system.¹⁰⁷ These exchanges in Kings suggest that the informal economy through reciprocity served an essential function within the larger social matrix. The very existence of this informal system suggests that sanctioned societal economies fell short of efficiently distributing goods and services to all sectors of society.

In recognizing the magnitude of the informal economy within the greater economic structure, one can see that non-elite reciprocity allows for the sustenance of an important social office, the prophet. The reigning monarchy has little motivation to support the existence of these anti-monarchic prophets like Elijah and Elisha. In contrast, those opposed to the monarchy have great interest in the prophetic messages and acts. Even the kings have occasion to secretly procure these prophetic services. Thus, this reciprocal exchange provides real utilitarian value. Looking at the passages, the dominant commodities in non-elite exchange are not luxuries, like precious stones nor metals, not even tradable commodities like grain, wine or olive oil, rather the gifts to the prophets include only the

¹⁰⁷ Several economic anthropologists have noted the reciprocal kin-based nature of the informal economy. In superseding formal structures, one must rely on kinship and social standing in order to execute desired economic activities. Larissa Lomnitz sees reciprocal exchange as a driving informal mechanism in different levels of state control in the 1980s, including Chile (regulator of services), Mexico (regulator and distributor of services with limited state enterprise) and the Soviet Union (regulator, distributor and complete control of all official enterprise). Black markets appear in these societies only when the social conditions thwart reciprocal exchange such as class differential. Even in capitalist economies, decision makers often clandestinely depend on reciprocal social networks to serve specific needs. Joseph P. Gaughan and Louis A. Ferman, "Towards an Understanding of the Informal Economy," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 493 (1987): 15–25; Stuart Henry, "The Political Economy of Informal Economies," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 493 (1987): 137–153; Larissa Adler Lomnitz, "Informal Exchange Networks in Formal Systems," *American Anthropologist* 90 (1988): 42–55.

sustenance items, bread and water and in one case, honey.¹⁰⁸ In addition, the prophets receive lodging. Notably, these are all non-tradable goods intended for immediate consumption. The maintenance of this social office of prophecy demanded that the individual recipients of such services received proper payment. Gifting is certainly a social act, designed to create and maintain social bonds, and as a corollary used by marginalized prophetic communities to reject and ascribe shame. At the same time, this social act does fulfill utilitarian obligations in the feeding and care of the marginalized prophet.

From a wider perspective, the pervasiveness of reciprocity fits into the overall idea of Israelite society norms in regulation with perceived norms, values and expectations rather than the free-market mentality of Adam Smith. The economic exchange not only involves the commodity, but it also involves an investment into a social bond. Throughout 1 and 2 Kings, the narrative assumes a socially-embedded element to the economy and the various portrayals of reciprocity contributes to the overall message by subverting authority through rejection or empowering by invitation.

3.3.d. *Historical Considerations*

Like all other biblical texts, these prophetic stories have inevitably fallen into the trend to place their textualization in relatively late periods.¹⁰⁹ Certainly, these prophetic stories have a long, complex narrative tradition with significant edits during exilic and post-exilic periods. During the 1970s, several scholars concluded that these narratives, particularly of Elisha, reached their essential form before their inclusion into the DtrH.¹¹⁰ Even within the redaction of the various strata of the DtrH, studies on prophets suggest that these narratives provide valuable historical information on their social roles.¹¹¹ Most importantly, it is hard to ignore the

¹⁰⁸ Honey was clearly intended as a sustenance food as in 2 Sam 17:29 rather than luxury item in Gen 43:11.

¹⁰⁹ For examples see Eckart Otto and Reinhard Achenbach, *Das Deuteronomium Zwischen Pentateuch und Deuteronomistischem Geschichtswerk* (FRLANT 206, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004).

¹¹⁰ Simon J. Devries, *Prophet against Prophet* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978); Alexander Rofé, "The Classification in the Prophetic Stories," *JBL* 89 (1970): 429–430; Rofé, "Classes in the Prophetic Stories: Didactic Legends and Parables," in *Studies on Prophecy* (Leiden: 1974), H. Schweizer, *Elischa in Den Kriegen* (Munich: 1974), 143–164.

¹¹¹ Robert R. Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 194–206; cf. David L. Petersen, *The Roles of Israel's Prophets* (JSOTSS 17, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1981).

pre-exilic ideological intent within these stories. By portending destruction to the Bethel altar, the man-of-God promotes the activities of Josiah. In 1 Kings 14:1–3, Ahijah predicts the destruction of Samaria, but the passage does not seem to know about the events of 586 BCE. The longstanding struggles between Elijah / Elisha and the house of Omri appears more fitting in the immediate aftermath of the destruction of Samaria. All of these texts take their setting in the Northern Kingdom, which quickly faded from collective memory by the time of the exile. Unless one can account for the sudden interest in northern Israel in the exilic and post-exilic periods, a pre-exilic origin best fits the historical context and ideology of these prophetic narratives.

If one were to accept a pre-exilic provenance for the origin of these texts, then one sees a marginalized economic group during the Iron IIB-C period that depends heavily on reciprocity as a means of exchange. The call to prophecy does not merely proclaim the message of YHWH, but it also encompassed a certain lifestyle, embracing a lower socioeconomic status. Such a movement is consistent with some other prophetic movements of the Bible such as Nazirites and Rechabites in their own fanatical devotion.

Because this non-elite reciprocal activity is essentially undetectable in material culture, one cannot definitively know how much this non-elite exchange played a role in the overall Israelite economy. But the economic actors in these narratives all seem to understand the social expectations of reciprocal exchange. Even with all of the diachronic textual accretions, the texts make minimal explanatory glosses to explain the social phenomena of individual reciprocal exchange. In considering the supporting ethno-archaeological testimony, one can expect a deeply reciprocal culture in all modes of economic exchange. 1 and 2 Kings does not narrate the mundane, but the extraordinary events. Thus, many of the normative economic activities of reaping, distributing and feasting are left unrecorded. Because of the special role of these northern prophets in the ideological intent of the DtrH, one can catch a glimpse of a normative exchange paradigm of reciprocal exchange.

3.4. *Summary and Conclusions*

A look at reciprocal exchange affirms its dominance as an economic mechanism in the book of Kings. Both international royal transaction and subsistence-scale barter with disenfranchised players reveal that

economic exchange has a social function. The biblical authors use this function within their greater ideologies in calling attention to both Solomonic glory and condemnation of kings.

But contrary to understanding of ancient reciprocity, both extant texts and biblical accounts suggests more than pure social relations. Indeed, the social relations largely function as a means of gaining material wealth, as well as an effective distributive mechanism for the itinerant prophetic community. In line with the development of economic anthropology, the biblical portrayal of reciprocity points to a highly mixed economy, with both substantivist and formalist concerns among the economic units. But except for the smallest, most primitive communities, reciprocity cannot subsist by itself. In ancient Israel, particularly under the constant backdrop of war, the economic life also depended heavily on redistribution.

CHAPTER FOUR

ASYMMETRICAL REDISTRIBUTION IN THE BOOK OF KINGS

The preceding chapter established reciprocity as a pervasive exchange mechanism in 1 and 2 Kings. These portrayals of reciprocal exchange help to shape the power dynamics between social agents. On an international scale, reciprocal exchange creates and cements the relationship with Solomon and international neighbors. On an individual level, the participation and refusal of reciprocal exchange contributes to the ideological intentions of the text. The exchange empowers the disenfranchised and sustains the prophets. Most significantly, the rejection of reciprocal exchange is not merely an economic decision, but integrated with rejection of those in opposition to YHWH.

Alongside reciprocity, Polanyi recognized that pre-modern economic systems also rely on the mechanism of redistribution. In fact, Polanyi declared both reciprocity and redistribution as deeply integrated with one mechanism serving the other.¹ To illustrate, the Late Bronze Age palatial economies of the Amarna letters traded via reciprocal exchange, but they had to centralize their resources in order to procure a stockpile of suitable gifts. Thus, while the international economies traded with each other on a symmetrical reciprocal basis, the individual domestic economies were more asymmetrically redistributive. In economic terms, redistribution requires a centralized force that can collect valuables from the periphery, store them, then redistribute in some form. In light of the theoretical discussions on the nature of the economies in Chapter Two, it is important to recognize that while the periphery almost exclusively sends countable material goods in the form of tribute, taxes or labor, the center does not necessarily return commensurate value back to the periphery. Often the redistributed good is religious blessings, identification with the ruling power or simply permission to continue living. The periphery may contribute to this self-exploiting movement by a variety of cultural regulators: custom, law, ideology or imposed force. Thus, redistribution requires a

¹ Karl Polanyi, "The Economy as Instituted Process."

geographic and/or symbolic center with power to coordinate and reinforce the movement of product.

For ancient Israel, as with any other polity, the movement to state formation must involve redistribution. A state begins with a center, which grows in scope and power at the expense of peripheral and traditional authorities. This center eventually gains control over resources and can coordinate large-scale economic efforts in production. These goals directly stem from the authority and values of the center, but therein lies the complexity of power within a redistributive state. Only a completely totalitarian state maintains the imbalances for perpetuity. For most states, the center somehow needs to coax willing participation in redistribution. This opens up difficult, yet insightful questions on the process in regards to egalitarian issues in redistribution as well as the methods to enforce asymmetrical economic movements.

Before examining these biblical portrayals of redistributive exchange, it is helpful to step back from the biblical texts and examine the rich material culture of the Southern Levant. Despite the considerable efforts of the archaeologists of the first half of the twentieth century, the study of material culture may not easily lend itself to verifying the historical accuracy of specific biblical events. As argued in Chapter Two, archaeology is much better at determining and assessing general processes and social movements over *la longue durée*. But with its focus towards elite and royal culture, archaeology can help identify certain clues to redistribution better than the other categories of reciprocity and market exchange. Such an archaeological investigation contextualizes certain historical aspects of the various narratives that portray redistribution. For example, the presence of storage installations may illuminate the movements of redistribution portrayed in the text. Furthermore, study of the material remains can also support the productivity of the theoretical model. According to Polanyi, regional landscape variation and the lagtime between the harvest to actual consumption promotes redistribution to maximize opportunities and minimize risks.² These factors match the Southern Levant with its diverse topography and alarmingly capricious agricultural yields. Thus, a preliminary survey at the archaeology of redistribution will help inform centralization in Kings. Specifically, we will review the archaeological evidence of redistribution during the formative periods of Israel from the

² Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 51.

purported United Monarchy (tenth century) to the Babylonian destructions of the late seventh and early sixth centuries.

After the archaeological survey, this chapter will analyze the portrayals of redistribution in both domestic and international spheres. Since the book of Kings records and evaluates the monarchies of Israel and Judah, the narrative provides numerous examples of such economic centers. For Israel and Judah, the royal house and temple served as centers to collect and choose to redistribute the product to the periphery. On an international scale, polities sent tribute to centers, mostly out of military coercion. The DtrH shows each of these centers receiving goods in exchange for some level of compensation redistributed to the periphery. Despite the recent movements to downgrade traditional Solomonic strata, certain archaeological evidence suggests that some of the redistributive exchange in the text has a degree of historical legitimacy. However, other archaeological evidence suggests a more modest appraisal of the economic scope of a purported United Monarchy.

Both sections of the chapter will focus on redistributive exchange according to Polanyi's parameters. Specifically, this category of exchange is asymmetrical under an established central authority. Throughout this chapter, the nature of redistribution forces a reconsideration of the Polanyian distinction of reciprocity and redistribution. It is hopeful that the discussion will transcend this artificial distinction, and present a glimpse of the complexity of the concert of both exchange methods.

4.1. *The Redistributive Economy in Pre-Exilic Israel*

Because Polanyian redistribution necessitates a central authority, archaeology can serve as a valuable tool for assessing this movement. In fact, both the ancient past and present state of academic research contain biases that emphasize redistribution more than other exchange methods. In the past, the larger monumental and material remains often reflect the needs of a centralized power, typically a royal power or a cultic authority. Until very recently, archaeologists nearly exclusively devoted their efforts to seek out remains of the elite and privileged peoples. Great palaces and royal archives spark excitement, and the prestige of the ancient elites often transfers to the modern excavators, as findings serve as important sources for reconstructing the political histories of the areas. Serendipitously, this longstanding bias for elite material remains serves our study for redistribution. In particular, the construction of major architectural

structures requires a central power to administer redistributive exchange. Workers must quarry the stone, transport them to the construction site, then build the structure according to an architecturally feasible plan. This authority then provides food, housing and overall sustenance to the workers over the life of the planned architectural project. Most importantly, the central power must persuade, coerce or beguile the laborers to forego their duties on their own agrarian lands in order to serve the needs of the central power. Of course, the central power somehow redistributes back to the periphery, though in an asymmetrical relationship, one can hardly expect that such redistribution is commensurate with the gained labor. This redistribution occurs with some sort of material compensation, or at the very least, an ideological identification with the central power.³

In addition to architecture, Northwest Semitic inscriptions can give contemporaneous account of specific redistributive measures. Sealings on jar handles and bullae provide evidence for a centralized administration. Collections of economic corpora at Samaria and Arad assume an asymmetrical economic relationship. Royal inscriptions describe specific examples of centralization analogous to portrayals in the DtrH. Like biblical historiography, these monumental inscriptions have ideological intent, which require critical readings to interpret the redistributive act of submitting tribute or levying taxes. But even within the hyperbole in royal inscriptions, Baruch Halpern argues that the tribute must adhere to the "Tiglath-Pileser principle," or a minimal amount of historical basis to be factual.⁴ When applicable, this section will utilize extant inscriptions to assess the redistribution in the Iron Age II Southern Levant.

As this chapter analyses the evidence for economic redistribution, it will refer to the "modified high chronology" of Amihai Mazar.⁵ In recent years, the relatively brief period of the purported United Monarchy has spawned an inordinate amount of scholarship regarding the so-called "high chronology" and "low chronology," with the former supporting traditional historicity of the Solomonic Empire as a legitimate state, and the latter suggesting that the historical David and Solomon were no more

³ Others do not classify this as exchange, but rather "One-way economic transfer," as movement of material good is only in one directional. Robert Hunt, "One-Way Economic Transfers," in *A Handbook of Economic Anthropology*, 290–301.

⁴ Baruch Halpern, *David's Secret Demons: Messiah, Murderer, Traitor, King* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001).

⁵ Mazar, "The Debate over the Chronology," 15–30; cf. Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible*, 368–402; Barkay, "The Iron Age II–III," 302–373.

than tribal chiefs. Although the cultural implications of this debate contain enormous repercussions considering the influence of Judaism and Christianity, the actual archaeological difference in interpretation is less than one hundred years, an immaterial amount in the scope of studying an Iron Age period three millennia old. Within this spirited discussion, Mazar recognizes the difficulty in separating the material remains between the ninth and tenth century. Thus, he proposes a chronology that fits the contentious strata into a single period of the Iron IIA (980–840/830 BCE).⁶ Mazar's recalibrated Iron IIA also acknowledges the similarity of material culture between the tenth and ninth centuries. His ensuing periods of Iron IIB (840/830–731/701 BCE) and Iron IIC (731/701–597/587 BCE) also fit reasonably clear delineations in strata, yet allows flexibility for the difficulty in dating Assyrian and Babylonian destruction layer. Thus, the Mazar chronology provides a useful entryway to date the observations on economic centralization.

4.1.a. *Iron Age IIA (980–840/830 BCE): State Formation*

The material culture of Iron IIA clearly displays the beginnings of state formation, and consequently economic centralization and redistribution. Even with the down-dating of the traditional Solomonic layers, Israel Finkelstein, the chief voice for the so-called “low chronology” concludes that, “The northern kingdom reached full-blown statehood no later than the first half of the ninth century.”⁷ An entire recapitulation of the archaeology of the tenth and ninth centuries is redundant and better left to other references.⁸ But it is important to review two categories of the material culture to help illuminate a culture of redistribution: architecture and settlement patterns. The state of both of these types of material remains helps to situate the level of statehood, and thus redistribution. Towards the end of Iron IIA, Israel's participation in the Battle of Qarqar (853 BCE) provides a helpful *terminus ante quem* for the establishment of statehood, at least for northern Israel.

The abundance of centralized architecture most prominently points to nascent state formation in the Iron Age IIA. Significantly, much of this architecture was erected following multiple strata of poor remains. For

⁶ Mazar, “The Debate over the Chronology,” 15–30.

⁷ Finkelstein, “State Formation in Israel and Judah,” 40.

⁸ Finkelstein, “State Formation,” 35–52; Mazar, “The Debate over the Chronology,” 15–30.

example, Megiddo stratum VB (high chronology, early tenth; low chronology, very late tenth century)⁹ is unfortified with modest construction of field stones and sun-baked brick, centered on ruins from earlier occupation.¹⁰ But, the ensuing stratum VA-IVB (high chronology, Solomonic; low chronology, early ninth century)¹¹ displays an entirely different settlement with impressive domestic and royal architecture. This level contains two major palace complexes on opposite sides of the tell, the northern palace 6000 and the southern palace 1723. Both palaces, particularly 1723, have *bit-ḥilani* characteristics of contemporary Syrian palaces.¹² They have thick walls and integrate with the peripheral defense system of the city. The northern palace adjoins casemate walls and a series of residential structures. The southern palace connects to an administrative building 1482. Both palaces, along with a third palace 338 all have impressive porticoes and large courtyards facing the middle of the tell. The palaces as well as the water supply system and the city gate all use high-quality ashlar construction, quarried from the eastern slope of the tell.¹³ Ornate palmette capitals form lavish decorations to the entrances for these monumental buildings.¹⁴ In sum, the two palatial complexes represent significant architectural achievements and luxury, inhabiting 20% of the entire

⁹ Yohanan Aharoni, Yigael Yadin and Yigal Shiloh, "Megiddo" in *NEAEHL*, 1023; Finkelstein, "State Formation," 38.

¹⁰ Aharoni, Yadin and Shiloh, "Megiddo" in *NEAEHL*, 1016–1017.

¹¹ Aharoni, Yadin and Shiloh, "Megiddo" in *NEAEHL*, 1023; Finkelstein, "State Formation," 38.

¹² Aharoni, Yadin and Shiloh, "Megiddo" in *NEAEHL*, 1017. Recently, Gunnar Lehmann and Ann E. Killebrew identify Palace 6000 as arising from a separate archaeological tradition than the *bit-ḥilani*. See Gunnar Lehmann and Ann E. Killebrew, "Palace 6000 at Megiddo in Context: Iron Age Central Hall Tetra-Partite Residencies and the *Bit-Ḥilāni* Building Tradition in the Levant," *BASOR* 359 (2010): 13–38.

¹³ This period sees the beginning of pervasive ashlar construction, square smooth stones placed in headers and stretchers construction, as well as the discovery of Iron IIA ashlar quarries in Megiddo and Samaria. Whether a cultural borrowing or direct import of foreign craftsmen, this technique required central planning and allocation of major resources. Ashlar construction appears in the tenth and ninth centuries in the Megiddo, Hazor and Gezer gates, Megiddo palaces, and later in Ta'anach, Tel Sera' and Ramat Rahel; Barkay, "The Iron Age II–III," 315–319.

¹⁴ Four of the thirteen Megiddo palmette capitals were found in VA-IVB and others may have well originated from this time before their later secondary usages; Aharoni, Yadin and Shiloh, "Megiddo" in *NEAEHL*, 1017. This period also sees the emergence of palmette capitals in Megiddo, then shortly thereafter in Dan, Hazor, and Samaria, even later in Jerusalem and Ramat Rahel. These rectangular ashlar blocks had curving palmettes surrounding a triangle and they supported pillars, pilasters and doorjambs. These similar styles appearing in different geographical regions may suggest a direct administration overseeing the architectural activity, and preserving some uniformity; Barkay, "The Iron Age II–III," 315–319.

tell. Regardless of the identification of Megiddo VA-IVB to the tenth or ninth centuries, the architectural structures suggest a beginning of major authoritative center that could plan and execute such impressive construction.

When comparing these features of Megiddo palatial architecture to other major sites, a pattern of centralization and architectural uniformity emerges. Immediately following architecturally modest strata, several sites display a sudden surge in architecture in Iron IIA. At Hazor, Amnon Ben-Tor declares that stratum XII can “hardly be called a city,” and stratum XI has “no definite structures” in their excavated region.¹⁵ But suddenly with stratum X, contemporary with Megiddo VA-IVB, Hazor is a fortified city with casemate walls, which surround the western area of the upper city. Although this city was violently destroyed, the ninth century strata (IXA-VIII-VII) show that the city built even more impressive structures. The city occupied twice as much area as the tenth century with an extended wall protecting the expansion. Most importantly in terms of centralization, the ninth century shows construction of several massive facilities to store goods, such as multiple pillared storehouses with remnants of enormous storage vessels, as well as two adjacent silos dug into the earth with a capacity of 60–70 tons of grain (areas A-1, A-3).¹⁶ Next to the storehouses lie several domestic residences, which the excavators interpret as the housing for the officials that administered these storage centers.

These architectural advances are not limited to northern Israel. After a gap of 1500 years, Arad began settlement in Iron I (stratum XII) with an unfortified group of modest structures surrounding a worship center.¹⁷ The settlers improved their buildings in the tenth and ninth centuries with a fortress surrounded by a casemate wall. Though destroyed, the site quickly rebuilt another fortress in stratum X with a solid four meter wall with insets at nine to ten meter intervals. These layers also contain storehouses, industrial installations and large vessels that suggest a role of redistribution.¹⁸ This redistributive economic activity may connect to the presence of a major temple, the first worship precinct in the archaeological record of Israel. This building orients to the East, with three successive

¹⁵ Yadin and Amnon Ben-Tor, “Hazor” in *NEAEHL*, 600–601.

¹⁶ Ben-Tor, “Hazor” in *NEAEHL*, 1774–1775.

¹⁷ Yohanan Aharoni, Miriam Aharoni, Ruth Amiran and Ornit Ilan, “Arad” in *NEAEHL*, 82.

¹⁸ Y. Aharoni, M. Aharoni, Amiran and Ilan, “Arad” in *NEAEHL*, 82.

rooms, a hall, a sanctuary and a holy of holies with thick plaster and a *massebot*.¹⁹ This worship precinct ties to the original high place of stratum XII, and continued to expand in complexity throughout Iron Age II.

South of Arad, the architecture of Beersheba also substantiates centralization and redistribution. Iron Age I and early Iron Age II residences show a settlement of small units and unfortified residences. But beginning in stratum V, the settlement builds fortifications and extends over the entire summit.²⁰ Stratum V and IV contain many similarities with their casemate walls and four-chambered gates. Most interesting for Arad, the city shows evidence of deliberate city planning. The city gates and wall construct along similar walls throughout the settlement of the Iron Age II. Streets and houses maintain similar positions, and the overall city is oval, matching the topography. All streets eventually converge on the gate square. This meticulous city planning is quite remarkable and reflective of a developed administrative center. In addition, the city also shows evidence of active redistribution with its tripartite pillared buildings and an abundance of pottery finds, presumably for storage.

The preceding four strata of Megiddo, Hazor, Arad and Beersheba form crucial parts of the so-called Solomonic layers, (or Omride according to the low chronology). In addition to these sites, sudden architectural activity appears through the Southern Levant. At Tell Beit Mirsim, strata B1 and B2 contain minimal remains except for grain pits and their pottery content. Suddenly in B3, a casemate wall is erected with a thick outer wall (1.55 meters), and a significant inner wall (one meter) with multiple gates.²¹ Beth Shemesh has a similar wall in form and dimension (IIA) also appearing after an unplanned village (III), as well as large storage houses between residential areas.²² Ben-Tor classifies Jokneam XVI as a poor settlement, XV as unfortified, but observes that stratum XIV reveals a fully fortified city with a casemate wall.²³ Gezer X and IX (Iron Age I) contain poor architecture, then stratum VIII contains a four entryway city-gate with ashlar masonry and integrated drains, as well as a casemate wall with ashlar masonry towers.²⁴ En Gev's earliest occupation belongs

¹⁹ Y. Aharoni, M. Aharoni, Amiran and Ilan, "Arad" in *NEAEHL*, 83.

²⁰ Jean Perrot, Iris Eldar, Yaacov Baumgarten and Ze'ev Herzog, "Beersheba" in *NEAEHL*, 170–171.

²¹ William F. Albright and Raphael Greenberg, "Tell Beit Mirsim" in *NEAEHL*, 179.

²² Shlomo Bunimovitz, Zvi Lederman and Dan Bahat, "Beth Shemesh" in *NEAEHL*, 250.

²³ Ben-Tor, "Jokneam" in *NEAEHL*, 807–808.

²⁴ Gezer VIII has unimpressive domestic remains, further indicating its presence as an administrative center; William G. Dever, "Gezer" in *NEAEHL*, 505.

to Iron IIA with an enormous casemate wall, appropriate for its location along a vulnerable plain, including long pillared halls. The recent excavators, Moshe Kochavi and Akio Tsukimoto, concluded that En Gev deliberately replaced Tel Hadar as the eastern Galilee commercial port.²⁵ At Tell en-Naşbeh (biblical Mizpah), after 1500 year abandonment, the site contains fragments of Philistine pottery, then in the beginning of Iron II (stratum 3), the town builds major defense walls as thick as two meters, with complex gates and a row of stone-lined storage bins.²⁶ In Samaria, although not completely uninhabited before Omri as previously thought, a major acropolis appears during the early ninth century with an inner wall and quickly ensuing casemate wall.²⁷ The royal structures are poorly preserved, but undoubtedly of high quality according to the abundance of elite finds. Lachish has no occupation in Iron I, but at the beginnings of Iron IIA, the city contains an unwalled city with a cultic center with the possibility of houses forming a chain defense around the city. In the next phase (IV), Lachish appears to be a large fortified city.²⁸ At Tel Dan, occupation continued during the Iron Age I, but the development and fortification of Dan as a major cult center occurred during the Iron IIA.²⁹ Similar to Arad, many redistributive elements correlate to religious significance. Enormous storage jars and pithoi contain religious motifs near the *bamah*. Another *bamah* B contains building characteristics also found at Iron Age Samaria, Megiddo and Ramat Rahel. An impressive set of fortifications protected these structures: Avraham Biran specifies that these features demonstrate that, "Jeroboam I presumably wished to make the place not only a religious but also an administrative and military center."³⁰ This can explain the combination of defense, storage and cultic remains at the Iron Age level.

In addition to these palatial structures and fortifications, much of the architecture may be interpreted as direct evidence of Polanyian redistribution because of the association to storage. The building genre of pillared tripartite structure is often attributed to storage. These tripartite structures consist of elongated buildings with long aisles, divided by square

²⁵ Ofer Bar-Yosef, Benjamin Mazar and Moshe Kochavi, "En Gev" in *NEAEHL*, 1725–1726.

²⁶ Jeffrey R. Zorn, "Tell en-Naşbeh" in *NEAEHL*, 1099–1101.

²⁷ Nahman Avigad, "Samaria (city)" in *NEAEHL*, 1302–1306.

²⁸ David Ussishkin, "Lachish" in *NEAEHL*, 905.

²⁹ Avraham Biran, "Dan" in *NEAEHL*, 329.

³⁰ Avraham Biran, "Dan" in *NEAEHL*, 329.

pillars. The pillars likely supported the roof of a central hall with high windows and ashlar blocks in the building. These tripartite structures often stand in close proximity with the palatial architecture of early Iron IIA. Tripartite pillared systems appear in multiple Iron Age IIA sites such as Abu Hawam (IV), Qasile (V), Beth Shemesh (IIa), Hazor (VIII), Megiddo (IVA), Lachish (IV-III), El-Hesi (Fifth City), Malhata (Period C), Tel Masos (stratum II).³¹ Since Frederick J. Bliss' discovery of these pillared buildings, the interpretation of these structures has varied wildly. Bliss initially suggested that they were military barracks, an interpretation later resuscitated by Volkmar Fritz.³² Elihu Grant and G. Ernest Wright interpreted the Beth Shemesh structure as a temple, according to the association of pillars with temples.³³ At various points, P.L.O. Guy, Robert S. Lamon and Geoffrey M. Shipton, Yigal Shiloh, Yigael Yadin and John Holladay also identified the Megiddo structures as stables with stone troughs and tethering holes within the structures, as well as the references to Solomon's horses in 2 Kgs 10:26–28.³⁴ Lawrence Herr determined the pillared buildings to act as sort of a marketplace, and James Pritchard argued that these buildings serve as storage units.³⁵ But presently, the interpretation of these tripartite structures at Megiddo as horse stables is most accepted.³⁶

But whereas these structures in Megiddo function as stables, elsewhere in ancient Israel, they serve can serve a different purpose, namely storage centers. A standard building need not have the same function in different sites. Robert Hamilton suggested that these tripartite structures served

³¹ Larry G. Herr, "Tripartite Pillared Buildings and the Market Place in Iron Age Palestine," *BASOR* 272 (1988), 48.

³² Frederick Jones Bliss, *A Mound of Many Cities: Or, Tell El Hesi Excavated* (New York & London: Macmillan, 1894) 96; Volkmar Fritz, "Bestimmung und Herkunft des Pfeilerhauses in Israel," *ZDPV* 93 (1977): 30–45.

³³ E. Grant and G. Ernest Wright, *'Ain Shems Excavations* vol. 5 (Haverford: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1939), 69.

³⁴ P.L.O. Guy, *New Light from Armageddon* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931), 44–48; Robert S. Lamon and Geoffrey M. Shipton, *Megiddo I: Seasons of 1925–34, Strata I–V* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1939), 59; Yigal Shiloh, "The Four-Room House—Its Situation and Function in the Israelite City," *IEJ* 20 (1970), 180; Yigael Yadin, "The Stables of Megiddo," *Eretz-Israel* 11 (1972), 57; John S. Holladay, Jr., "The Stable of Ancient Israel," in *The Archaeology of Jordan and Other Studies*, ed. Lawrence T. Herr and Larry G. Geraty (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 1986), 150.

³⁵ Herr, "Tripartite Pillared Buildings and the Market Place in Iron Age Palestine." 47–67; Pritchard, James B. "The Megiddo Stables: A Reassessment," in *Near Eastern Archaeology in the Twentieth Century*, ed. James A. Sanders (Garden City: Doubleday, 1970), 268–276.

³⁶ Deborah O'Daniel Cantrell, "The Horsemen of Israel: Horses and Chariotry in Monarchic Israel (Ninth-Eighth Centuries B.C.E.)" (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 2008), 110–145.

as storage centers at Abu Hawam, followed by James Starkey (Lachish), William F. Albright (Beth Shemesh), Olga Tufnell and Yadin (Hazor).³⁷ In addition to these pillared structures, excavators have uncovered unpillared storage areas in Hazor, Samaria, Lachish and Jerusalem.³⁸ Storage was crucial to administer the vast building projects, which required dedicated labor. The existence of such major storage facilities at sites like Beersheba and Hazor align with the need for a polity to build infrastructure to execute large-scale redistribution.

Besides architecture, Northwest Semitic epigraphic texts can further contribute to the picture of centralization and redistribution in the Iron Age IIA. The Mesha Inscription illustrates the redistributive nature of an emerging polity's building projects, in this case, Moab. On the inscription, dated to the end of Iron Age IIA, King Mesha makes claim to religious devotion to the patron deity, Chemosh and the concomittant military victories. Mesha recounts the great building projects to confirm these claims:

I took from Moab two hundred men, all his captains. And I brought them to Yahaz, And I seized it in order to add (it) to Dibon. I (myself) have built the 'citadel', 'the wall(s) of the forest' and the wall of the 'acropolis'. And I built its gates; And I built its towers. And I built a royal palace; and I made the ramparts for the reservo[ir for] water in the mid-st of the city. But there was no cistern in the midst of the city, in the 'citadel,' so I said to all the people, "Make [for] yourselves each man a cistern in his house". And I hewed the shaft for the 'citadel' with prisoners of Israel. I built Aroer, and I made the highway in the Arnon. I built Beth-Bamot, because it was in ruins.³⁹

Within the context of the inscription, Mesha sees the activities of construction throughout the kingdom as legitimating his empire. He boasts of his ability to conscript labor to produce structures that benefit the whole people. Such a royal claim will prove illustrative in studying the portrayals of redistribution in the book of Kings.

In addition to the architecture, Iron IIA shows interesting settlement patterns that suggest a centralized authority. For the first time, the Judaeans

³⁷ Robert W. Hamilton, "Excavations at Tell Abu Hawam," *QDAP* 4 (1934): 1–69; James L. Starkey, "Excavations at Tell Ed-Duweir," *PEQ* 69 (1937): 237; William F. Albright, *Tell Beit Mirsim III: The Iron Age* (New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1943), 22–24; Olga Tufnell, *Lachish III* (London: Oxford University, 1953), 61; for Yadin see "Megiddo" in *NEAEHL*, 601.

³⁸ Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible*, 478.

³⁹ *COS* 2.23.

hillside appears to develop under a redistributive authority.⁴⁰ The Shephelah shows settlement activity in Beth Shemesh (IIa), Tell Beit Mirsim (B3), Timnah (IV), Tel Halif (VII).⁴¹ In the north, the Upper Galilee sees major settlement at Dan (IV), the Lower Galilee shows Iron IIA strata at Tell Keisan (8C-8A), Tel Kinrot (IV), Tell Abu-Hawan (III). Besides Megiddo, the Jezreel Valley also shows settlement at Taanach (IIA-IIB), Yoqnean (XVI-XIV) and Tell Qiri (VIIA). The Samarian Hills reveals contemporary remains at Samaria (Pottery I-II), Tirzah (VIIB) and Shechem (X).⁴² Though largely uninhabited through much of the second millennium, the Central Negev highlands, witness the emergence of about fifty enclosures over a wide distribution, possibly with the intent of planned settlement over the region.⁴³ Alongside these fortresses, the northern Negev sees settlement in Tel Beersheba (VII-V) and Arad (XII).⁴⁴ These settlements have impressive architectural features, replete with artefacts from beyond the Negev, such as burnished red slipped pottery alongside local handmade pottery or Negevite ware. The presence of advanced burnished red slip pottery actually appeared in the Negev before the major centers of Megiddo, Hazor or Gezer.⁴⁵ This suggests that the central Negev highlands were much more than a mere peripheral zone, but rather integrated with the administration of a greater polity. The impressive architectural features with advanced pottery styles, without commensurate domestic dwellings suggest that the Negev settlements were planned communities that arose from a centralized polity. Mazar interprets this as a symbiotic relationship between the nomadic tribes and a central force

⁴⁰ Based on a spatial analysis of the Judaeen highlands, Avi Ofer states, "But probably the most important archaeological fact is, as discussed above, that the socio-economic and political structure of Judah at that period (tenth century) is that of a well-integrated unit, most probably a kingdom, most probably subject to the site of Jerusalem; Avi Ofer, "The Monarchic Period in the Judaeen Highland: A Spatial Overview," in *Studies in the Archaeology of the Iron Age in Israel and Jordan*, ed. A. Mazar (JSOTSS 331, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 27.

⁴¹ Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible*, 387–388.

⁴² Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible*, 390–397.

⁴³ The origin of these settlements is contested over four major positions: (1) Amalekite settlements of the eleventh century destroyed by Israelites; (2) Israelite desert nomad settlements; (3) central state initiative under the United Monarchy; and (4) fortresses to defend the southern borders of Solomon's kingdom. See Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible*, 395.

⁴⁴ Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible*, 390–397.

⁴⁵ Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 465.

with economic / political motivation to settle this area.⁴⁶ This settlement activity may possibly relate to the discovery of major copper production at Khirbet en-Nahas though the excavators are reticent to make such a direction conclusion at this time.⁴⁷

This settlement in the central Negev highlands matches the topographical list of Shishak, which accounts for late tenth century destructions in the Southern Levant. Interestingly, Shishak claims to lay destruction to seventy sites in the Negev, many of sites containing overlap with Hebrew toponyms.⁴⁸ In such an inscription, the fact that Shishak mentions so many regions of the Negev in a military campaign suggests that the settlement was much more significant than local nomadic population. The settlement must have stood as a formidable obstacle to the economic interests of Shishak.

Such Egyptian interest in the Negev is best attributable to a central polity with great interests in this region. This interpretation can also account for the link between discoveries at Beersheba with the systematic city-plan of Megiddo and other regions of northern Israel. At the very least, this deliberate settlement of communities and fortresses necessitate a centralized plan and execution.

One of the strongest pieces of evidence arguing for centralization comes from Shalmanassar III's account of the Battle of Qarqar (853 BCE). In this account, the Assyrian monarch boasts of defeating a large conglomerate of West Semitic allies. The text makes specific reference to, "King Ahab of Israel sent 2,000 chariots and 10,000 soldiers."⁴⁹ This inscription shows Israel as a major kingdom with a significant contribution to the coalition. Besides the mere mention, Israel provides for one of the largest shares of the coalition. The Neo-Assyrian king would only mention Israel if it stood

⁴⁶ Barkay, "The Iron Age II–III," 338–344; Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible*, 438–455. Finkelstein attributes the sudden Negev settlement to nomadic populations; see Israel Finkelstein, *Living on the Fringe: The Archaeology and History of the Negev, Sinai and Neighboring Regions in the Bronze and Iron Ages* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995).

⁴⁷ E. Ben-Yosef et al., "A New Approach for Geomagnetic Archaeointensity Research: Insights on Ancient Metallurgy in the Southern Levant," *Journal of Archaeological Science* 35 (2008): 2863–2879; Thomas E. Levy, "Pastoral Nomads and Iron Age Metal Production in Ancient Edom," in *Nomads, Tribes, and the State in the Ancient Near East* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 147–176; Levy et al., "Lowland Edom and the High and Low Chronologies: Edomite State Formation, the Bible and Recent Archaeological Research in Southern Jordan," in *The Bible and Radiocarbon Dating*, 129–163.

⁴⁸ Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 462–463.

⁴⁹ COS 2.113A.

as a significant polity, whose defeat could help legitimize the power of the monarch. Following Assyrian historiography, the inscription needed to match a "Tiglath-Pileser Principle," which argues that historiography must have some basis in historical fact for the inscription to have its intended political effect.⁵⁰ Thus, Israel must have operated as a significant political entity by the late ninth century. This matches well with the distinguished archaeological remains of a royal acropolis in Samaria and Jezreel, sites that were modest and unassuming before the Omrides.

Finally, the celebrated six-chambered gates of Megiddo, Hazor and Gezer warrant mention. Their original association with the Solomonic period out of the reference to 1 Kings 9:15 have come under increased scrutiny. Traditionally, the discovery of six-chambered gate along a casemate wall at Gezer set along an academic chain reaction. The discovery motivated Yadin to reassess the six-chambered gate of Megiddo to "Solomonic" stratum VA-IVB, and Hazor X, demonstrating a royal uniformity of the three cities under Solomonic rule.⁵¹ Further excavations at Gezer and Hazor claim to corroborate the identity of a Solomonic strata and a legitimated the development of a United Monarchy pottery typology.⁵² Later studies determine that these six-chambered gates were not completely uniform, but at least all adhered to the Egyptian royal cubit.⁵³ Archaeologists subsequently linked the identification of the Solomonic cities of Megiddo, Hazor and Gezer to Arad stratum XI and Beersheba stratum V and the archaeological evidence for an authentic United Monarchy received wide acceptance.

Recent years have challenged the absolute chronology of this purported United Monarchy, particularly in regards to the dating of the Megiddo six-chambered gate to the traditional "Solomonic" stratum IVA-VB. Because this layer does not have a city-wall leads some to conclude that the gate actually belongs to the later IVA, which many date to the Omride era or later. In fact, by shifting the entire Philistine pottery sequence, the so-called "low chronology" dates "Solomonic" Megiddo VA-IVB to the early

⁵⁰ Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 124–132.

⁵¹ Yigael Yadin, "Hazor, Gezer and Megiddo in Solomon's Time," in *The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah*, ed. A. Malamat (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1961), 66–109.

⁵² William G. Dever, *Recent Archaeological Discoveries and Biblical Research* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990), 87–117.

⁵³ David Milson, "The Design of the Royal Gates at Megiddo, Hazor, and Gezer," *ZDPV* 102 (1986), 87–92.

ninth century, and the six-chambered gate to the reign of Jeroboam II.⁵⁴ David Ussishkin gives additional analyses for the downdating of the “Solomonic” strata, particularly in arguing against the identification of Megiddo VA-IVB with Shishak’s destructions of the later tenth century.⁵⁵ The precise dating of these layers of 1 Kings 9 remains contentious.⁵⁶

But whereas the so-called “high-low chronology” debate has tremendous implications on the historicity of the biblical narrative concerning the United Monarchy, the absolute chronological dispute is less than one hundred years, an immaterial amount in archaeological dating. Both interpretations fall within the Mazar’s modified Iron Age IIA, and both interpretations affirm the creation of a national polity during Iron Age IIA. The procurement of resources and the administration of labor required for these projects preclude the existence of a major political power. The architecture shares many similar features across distant geographical sites, suggesting a deliberate political administration rather than mere cultural influence. Furthermore, many of the architectural structures such as storage centers exist for the purpose of executing the redistributive precursor of collection. By broadening the period of Iron Age IIA to Mazar’s modified chronology, the evidence of early statehood is substantial, whether one accepts the traditional Solomonic strata or the revisionist theories associated with Finkelstein, Ussishkin and others.

Although the Iron Age IIA began a period of centralization in the Southern Levant, the material culture evinces a polity much more modest than the DtrH portrayal of a cosmopolitan and developed United Monarchy. While showing a distinct and clear break from the semi-nomadic character of Iron I, the Iron IIA material culture appears to represent a period of early state formation in Israel and little more.⁵⁷ Excavations

⁵⁴ In defending a wholesale “lowering” of the Solomonic layers to the ninth century, Israel Finkelstein challenges the pottery dating based on the lynchpin of Philistine Monochrome/Mycenaean IIIC by dating Philistine settlement after the collapse of the XXth Dynasty of Egypt. Israel Finkelstein, “State Formation in Israel and Judah,” 35–52.

⁵⁵ David Ussishkin, “Notes on Megiddo, Gezer, Ashdod, and Tel Batash in the Tenth to Ninth Centuries B.C.,” *BASOR* 277/278 (1990): 71–91.

⁵⁶ For a summary of the scholarship behind 1 Kgs 9:15, see William M. Schniedewind, “Excavating the Text of 1 Kings 9: In Search Of ‘The Gates of Solomon,’” in *Historical Biblical Archaeology and the Future*, ed. Thomas E. Levy (London: Equinox, 2010), 241–249.

⁵⁷ Several have disputed the tenth century analysis of a linear progression from tribe to statehood. See Philip S. Khoury and Joseph Kostiner, “Introduction: Tribes and the Complexities of State Formation in the Middle East,” in *Tribe and State Formation in the Middle East*, eds. Philip S. Khoury and Joseph Kostiner (Berkeley: 1990), 3–4. This study refers to state formation as a period of a budding polity, and in Israel’s case a polity centered on patrimonial ideals. Cf. Alexander H. Joffe, “The Rise of Secondary States in the Iron Age

reveal minimal definitive evidence for large-scale industrial installation or luxury items.⁵⁸ Authorities redistributed labor primarily to construct buildings, but in large measure, not for specialized agriculture for export. Urban planning is established, yet still nascent. In addition, the ceramic assemblage is relatively uniform throughout the country suggesting a lack of foreign imports.⁵⁹ Most strikingly, the Iron IIA period lacks significant evidence for state-sponsored writing, a frequent characteristic of a developed polity.⁶⁰ But looking at the scope of the centralized building, one can deduce that such projects required a central authority to divert resources to the center. At the very least, an infrastructure existed that could develop into a full-scale redistributive economy.

4.1.b. *Iron Age IIB (840/830–732/701 BCE): Neo-Assyrian Threat*

The rise of the Neo-Assyrians completely overhauled the ancient Levantine economic landscape. Although the Neo-Assyrian empire may have had its most direct impact on ancient Israel during the invasions of latter half of the eighth century, the redistributive economic policy of the

Levant," *JESHO* 45 (2002): 425–467; Daniel M. Master, "State Formation Theory and the Kingdom of Ancient Israel," *JNES* 60 (2001): 117–131.

⁵⁸ Abu Hawam IV 33, 34, 35 may be storage centers though the site sits on the coastal plain and its Shishak destruction is highly contested. Qasile V has a storehouse on the coastal plain V. Beth-Shean V-upper has a large hall east of the city-gate that may be a storehouse; Barkay, "The Iron Age II–III," 310–315.

⁵⁹ The pottery does mark a major improvement over Iron I. Imports, often Cypro-Phoenician ware, begin to appear in large quantities from the tenth century throughout the Iron Age. Both wheel burnish and red slip begin to appear; Barkay, "The Iron Age II–III," 325–327.

⁶⁰ John Holladay's analysis of the development of centralization in Iron Age II overstates the epigraphic evidence; Holladay, "The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah," 368–398. The few examples in all of the Iron IIA evidence amounts to a few El-Khadr arrowheads inscribed with names, Izbet Sarta ostrakon, the Gezer Calendar and the recently discovered abecedarium at Tel Zayit. But all of these examples actually can argue against the prevalence of literacy. All of them appear to function as ritualistic magical texts, suggesting that writing was rare, elitist and thus had magical efficacy. Overall, Holladay is right in the overall move towards specialization, but he completely overextends the grandeur of the tenth century. Even the recent discoveries of the Tel Zayit abecedarium and the Khirbet Qeiyafa ostrakon, the number of inscriptions from Iron IIA is paltry compared to the extant texts in subsequent Iron Age periods. Haggai Misgav, Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor, "The Ostrakon," in *Khirbet Qeiyafa Vol. 1. Excavation Report 2007–2008*, eds. Y. Garfinkel and S. Ganor (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2009), 243–257; Ada Yardeni, "Further Observations on the Ostrakon," in *Khirbet Qeiyafa Vol. 1. Excavation Report 2007–2008*, eds. Y. Garfinkel and S. Ganor (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2009), 259–260; Ron E. Tappy et al., "An Abecedarium of the Mid-Tenth Century B.C.E. From the Judean Shephelah," *BASOR* 344 (2006): 5–46.

Neo-Assyrians actually began over a century earlier with their threatening intrusion on Levantine lands. With the Assyrians' formidable army and their insatiable appetite for wealth, Levantine polities began to centralize themselves for two centuries of conflict, thus catalyzing major redistribution movements and entrenching of power not only in Israel, but also in cities like Arpad, Carchemish and Hamath in the north, the Phoenician port cities such as Arvad and Tyre, as well as Damascus in the east.

The Neo-Assyrian military encroachment intensified the redistributive economy in at least three ways. First, the Neo-Assyrian advancement motivated urgent upgrades and overhauls of existing defense fortifications. Such an effort required resources for both materials and sustaining the large labor forces. The vast fortifications point to a central power to collect assets and redistribute to the peoples in the form of defense, the paradigmatic example of a public good.⁶¹ Second, during at least one point during the reign of Jehu, the Neo-Assyrian crisis forced the Northern Kingdom to submission, as depicted in both the DtrH as well as Shalmanessar III's Black Obelisk.⁶² According to both texts, Israel had to pay large tribute and presumably, agree to a regular annual tribute to their Assyrian overlords. Thus, Israel had to procure these items from throughout the land to pay off their political masters. Third, when the conflicts with the Aramaean city-states diverted the attention of the Assyrian armies away from Israel during the early eighth century, the intact redistributive infrastructure allowed for the continued centralization, but benefiting Samaria rather than their Assyrian overlords.⁶³

Whereas the material culture of Iron Age IIA reveals a centralized building program of early state formation, Iron Age IIB shows a development into full-scale national urban planning. Based on sheer size, Samaria

⁶¹ National defense as a public good assumes that the fortification equally protects every resident of the state, from the impoverished widow to the royal household. The definition can break down if one considers the use of massive defense fortifications as a legitimization of authority, which would proportionally benefit the ruling party more than others.

⁶² During this ninth century, Ashurnasirpal II first began the systematic policy of booty and tribute, a policy that his successor Shalmaneser III further developed; See Shigeo Yamada, *The Construction of the Assyrian Empire* (Leiden: Brill, 2000); "I received the tribute of Jehu (Ia-ú-a) of Bit-Ḥumrī: silver, gold, a golden bowl, a golden goblet, golden cups, gold buckets, tin, a staff of the king's hand and Javelin." COS 2.113F: Epigraph 2, also see RIMA 3:62–71.

⁶³ Scholars have long associated the economic boom with the stable and lengthy reigns of Uzziah and Jeroboam II. See Chaney, "Bitter Bounty,"; Chaney, "Systemic Study of the Israelite Monarchy,"; Holladay, "The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah,"; Philip J. King, "The Eighth, the Greatest of Centuries?"

and Jerusalem emerge as the clear capitals of the land, though excavations are unable to discern more than isolated details. Beyond these two capitals, other major cities reveal extensive urban planning unparalleled in Iron IIA. Two examples can suffice. Megiddo IVA reveals a city plan entirely different from her Iron IIA layer with the exception of the reuse of the city gate (2156).⁶⁴ Many new structures were erected, such as an offset-inset wall 820 meters long and 3.6 meters thick. Many of the previous residential quarters were converted into more public squares of an administrative nature. In the Negev, the 1.2 hectares oval mound of Tel Beersheba II also reveals evidence for deliberate wide-scale urban design.⁶⁵ The four-chambered gate sits at the south with a central drainage passing under the gate, fed by an underground series of secondary channels. A series of concentric ovals with radial lanes all derive from the open square just inside of the city gates. The city also included a water basin, which descended to the level of the Beersheba basin. Even the casemate walls surrounding the city had domestic dwellings that corresponded to the radii and arcs of the city, suggesting central planning and little room for private initiative.

This centralized urban planning redistributed resources to improve on defense systems.⁶⁶ In order to withstand the Assyrian battering ram, the cities needed to develop more effective walls.⁶⁷ Solid walls replaced many of the casemate walls of the earlier Iron Age IIA period in many cities.⁶⁸ At Hazor V, the ancient city planners destroyed two luxurious homes in the northern end to construct a massive inset-offset wall on the west, north and south of the tell, sacrificing several adjoining buildings.⁶⁹ At the northwest corner, a lookout tower guarded the western end. In Jerusalem, the people rebuilt existing fortifications and new ones such as an enormous broad wall cut through existing residences.⁷⁰ Lachish (III) also

⁶⁴ Aharoni, Yadin and Shiloh, "Megiddo" in *NEAEHL*, 1020–1023.

⁶⁵ Barkay, "The Iron Age II–III," 330; Perrot, Eldar, Baumgarten and Herzog, "Beersheba" in *NEAEHL*, 171–173.

⁶⁶ For a review of the recent literature, see Kyle Keimer, "The Socioeconomic Impact of Hezekiah's Preparations for Rebellion," (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 2011).

⁶⁷ Yigael Yadin suggested that the battering ram was the most important factor in the design of Israelite fortifications. Although his theory has met much criticism, the ability to withstand Assyrian siege undoubtedly had a major influence on the Iron Age IIB defense designs; Yadin, "Solomon's City Wall and the Gate at Gezer," *IEJ* 8 (1958): 80–86.

⁶⁸ Yigael Yadin, "The Age of Monarchies—Culture and Society," in *The World History of the Jewish Peoples*, ed. Abraham Malamat (Jerusalem: Massada, 1979).

⁶⁹ Yadin and Ben-Tor, "Hazor" in *NEAEHL*, 603.

⁷⁰ Nahman Avigad, "Jerusalem" in *NEAEHL*, 704.

strengthened gates and built an enormous addition to the existing palace-fort.⁷¹ In anticipation of Assyrian attack, the city rebuilt the walls to 6.3 meters, an expansion from the earlier Iron Age IIA walls, with an added revetment wall on the lower slopes of the mound.⁷² In addition to the city-walls, excavations uncovered reinforcements of the steep slopes of the mounds with crushed limestone or stone facing in order to thwart the undermining of the wall.⁷³ Several sites have stone glacis: Lachish, Beersheba, Tel 'Ira, Tel Halif.⁷⁴ The proliferation of isolated desert fortresses with shared features in previously barren areas suggests centralized planning and deliberate redistribution of resources to build and protect these strategic strongholds.⁷⁵ Excavations reveal eighth century fortresses in Kadesh Barnea, Hurvat Teman, Tell el-Kheleifeh, Horvat 'Uza, likely all forming a chain of defense centered around the Arad fortress.⁷⁶

The development of sophisticated water systems is also a sign of redistribution. In modern economic terms, a water system is a classic public good. The effort required to construct and maintain a water system is far beyond the means of any individual or extended family. But collectively, a large group of people could collect their resources and expertise to build the structure that will benefit everyone with access to fresh water. In this regard, the Iron Age shows redistributive economies beyond the scale of the city-states of the Bronze Age. Though some may indicate that the lack of Late Bronze Age water installations is a result of "simple evolution," or the need to withstand siege it is difficult to imagine the sophistication of these states to lack the means of developing water system.⁷⁷ The political system may suggest another factor in the sudden development of water systems. Unlike the autonomous Late Bronze Age city-states, the Iron Age II cities arise under the direct control of an overarching polity. This

⁷¹ Ussishkin, "Dan" *NEAHL*, 907.

⁷² Barkay, "The Iron Age II–III," 308.

⁷³ Of course, these stone glacis canvas the Levantine cities in Middle Bronze II, though their resurgence in Iron IIB correlates to the Neo Assyrian sieges. See Aaron A. Burke, *Walled Up to Heaven: The Evolution of Middle Bronze Age Fortification Strategies in the Southern Levant* (SAHL 4, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2008).

⁷⁴ Barkay, "The Iron Age II–III," 329–332.

⁷⁵ Thareani-Sussely, "The 'Archaeology of the Days of Manasseh' Reconsidered in the Light of Evidence from the Beersheba Valley," *PEQ* 139 (2007), 71.

⁷⁶ Also, *mlk* jar handles appear in several of these sites (Tel Beersheba, Tel Aroer, Tel 'Ira), though in limited abundance. Nadav Na'aman, "Hezekiah's Fortified Cities and The 'MLK' Stamps," *BASOR* 261 (1986): 5–21.

⁷⁷ Barkay, "The Iron Age II–III," 334; Arie Issar, "The Evolution of the Ancient Water Supply System in Jerusalem," *IEJ* 26 (1976): 130–136.

centralized polity allowed for harnessing resources and sharing technology to create these water systems, which required high levels of hydroengineering sophistication.⁷⁸

Although the dating of water systems is problematic due to a variety of factors such as stratigraphic errors and poor excavation techniques, they appear to begin in the Iron IIA with the simpler systems and develop into complex, intricate structures through Iron Age IIB.⁷⁹ In Beersheba, this water system has multiple feeders, which connected to a reservoir with M3. Most of these water systems began in the Iron IIA period, with continued usage throughout the Iron Age. Recent excavations of the Beersheba water system link its architecture and layout to contemporary systems in Megiddo, Gibeon and Hazor. The Megiddo water system connects a spring at the base of the mound via an 80 meter tunnel, flowing 35 meters below the surface of the mound. First dated by Yadin to Stratum VIA, the construction more likely began in IVA with continued use throughout the Iron Age.⁸⁰ In Hazor, the water system in Area L descends 30 meters down a vertical shaft leading to a lengthy tunnel. Excavators suggest the beginnings of the system to strata VIII in accord to the Ahab reign as well as a four room house at the entrance of the water system.⁸¹ In Gibeon, two systems ran concurrently: a cylindrical shaft with a 79 step staircase went to a water system 24.4 meters below the surface, and involved the removal of 3000 tons of limestone. Also, a stepped tunnel of 93 steps led to the village spring.⁸² Gezer contains a seven meter shaft that connects to a 45 meter water tunnel that in turn to an enlarged cavern that collects groundwater. Unfortunately, the Macalister shaft was cut off from context though Dever suggests that it may likely date to similar structures of Iron IIA.⁸³ Stratum V of Arad contains an enormous water system by cutting a twelve by twelve meter square shaft through bedrock to a depth of fifteen meters. Four separate sources fed the system and gave a total capacity of 700 cubic meters.⁸⁴ Not surprisingly, the most complex water system of

⁷⁸ With a heightened need, the centralization allowed for harnessing resources and sharing technology to create these water systems, which required high levels of hydroengineering sophistication. With cities on the top of hills, but water sources near the bases, the city planners had to hew large vertical shafts to access the water source. These shafts had to accommodate winding stairs along the walls, often requiring additional support.

⁷⁹ Perrot, Eldar, Baumgarten and Herzog, "Beersheba" in *NEAEHL*, 1594.

⁸⁰ Aharoni, Yadin and Shiloh, "Megiddo" in *NEAEHL*, 1022–1023.

⁸¹ Yadin, Ben-Tor, "Hazor" in *NEAEHL*, 604–605.

⁸² James B. Pritchard, "Gibeon" in *NEAEHL*, 512; cf. 2 Sam 2:13.

⁸³ Dever, "Gezer" in *NEAEHL*, 503.

⁸⁴ Y. Aharoni, M. Aharoni, Amiran and Ilan, "Arad" in *NEAEHL*, 170–171.

Iron Age IIB is in Jerusalem. Hezekiah drilled a half-kilometer long conduit beneath the city without vertical shafts.⁸⁵ Other water systems exist at Kadesh Barnea, Khirbet Bal'ama, Yoknean and Tell Es-Sa'idiyeh.⁸⁶

Because of similarities in technology and features, a central polity likely built these systems at strategic locations along valuable routes of passage. Notably, each of these systems could hold a water supply far beyond the residents of the tell. Certainly, foreign military threat would make such a water supply important, but in addition, the water could serve centralized interests. Barkey suggests, "It is likely that the motive for the technological improvements in the system was the fear instilled by the ruthless expansionist demands of the Neo-Assyrian empire on all countries in the region from the ninth century onward."⁸⁷ One can also see how these sites center around major land routes to provide water for travelers, traders and administrators. Although simpler water projects appear in Mycenaean Greece and Iron Age Anatolia, the complexity of technology of the Iron Age II water systems of Israel are much more advanced. They require administration, bureaucracy and significant centrality to carry out the execution of these projects.

Perhaps the strongest evidence for centralization in the Iron IIB period is the explosion in extant literature. While these epigraphic finds are primarily mundane economic texts, the mass of evidence supports the presence of a bureaucratic infrastructure supporting a redistributive economy. This development did not occur during the earliest state formation of Iron Age IIA, as the extremely limited epigraphic remains do not suggest a pervasive literary culture.⁸⁸ But rather, it appears that the rapid urbanization of the late eighth century within the city of Jerusalem catalyzed the development of royally-sponsored writing. This literary activity supported the redistributive efforts of the centralized government, presumably as dictated by Hezekiah.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Barkay, "The Iron Age II–III," 332; cf. Is 36:2; 2 Kgs 20:20.

⁸⁶ Barkay, "The Iron Age II–III," 332–334; Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible*, 478–485; Hamdan Taba and Gerrit van der Kooij, *The Water Tunnel System at Khirbet Bal'ama* (Ramallah: The Department of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage, Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, 2007).

⁸⁷ Barkay, "The Iron Age II–III," 334.

⁸⁸ At best the only significant finds are the Gezer Calendar, the Tel Zayit abecedary and the recently discovered Khirbet Qeiyafa ostrakon. Two of the three discoveries are quite recent, and further research will help to analyze ancient Israelite literacy in light of these inscriptions; Tappy et al., "An Abecedary of the Mid-Tenth Century B.C.E."; Misgav, Garfinkel, and Ganor, "The Ostrakon."; Yardeni, "Further Observations on the Ostrakon."

⁸⁹ See Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book*, 64–90; For a contrarian perspective on literate culture and the formation of biblical text, see David W. Jamieson-Drake, *Scribes*

In terms of sheer volume, the *mlk* seals provide the largest evidence for the growing administrative activities of a centralized government. Hundreds of these seals have appeared primarily in Judah, but also in northern Israel as well on large vessels with narrow neck, wide shoulders with four handles and a narrow base. They held about 20–21 liters (2 baths) on average and stamps had royal insignia, plus one of four designated place names: Hebron, Socoh, Ziph and *mmšt*, likely a reference to an administrative center at Ramat Rahel.⁹⁰ The interpretations of *mlk* seals vary, but more recent years suggest that the seals identified these storage vessels as government property for military provisions.⁹¹ Most of the seals appear in regions that Sennacherib invaded: Jerusalem and its environs, the Shephelah, particularly the stronghold of Lachish, which provides solid stratigraphic evidence for dating the *mlk* seals to the late eighth century. Although a few seals appear in the seventh century, this is easily attributable to reusage, until the rosette stamps largely replaced the *mlk* seals.⁹² Overall, these uniform *mlk* sealings support a vast redistribution for military defense against an inevitable Neo-Assyrian invasion.

In addition to the *mlk* seals, various ostraca collections suggest a level of redistribution. In previous research, I argue that the Samaria ostraca show a form of redistribution, identifiable to the anthropological sub-category of “competitive feasting.”⁹³ Specifically, the Samaria Ostraca document an attempt of a centralized power to redistribute goods with the motivation to gain political support.⁹⁴ A perspective of consumption

and Schools in Monarchic Judah: A Socio-Archeological Approach (JSOTSS 109, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991).

⁹⁰ Na'aman, “Hezekiah's Fortified Cities and The ‘LMLK’ Stamps,” 5–21; Raz Kletter argues that the volume did not reflect perfect standardization, but rather the volume of jars varies by 7–10%; Kletter, “Comment: Computational Intelligence, *mlk* Storage Jars and the Bath Unit in Iron Age Judah,” *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 16 (2009): 357–365; Kletter argues against the claimed precision of Elena Zapassky, Israel Finkelstein, and Itzhak Benenson, “Computing Abilities in Antiquity: The Royal Judahite Storage Jars as a Case-Study,” *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 16 (2009): 51–57.

⁹¹ Na'aman, “Hezekiah's Fortified Cities and The “LMLK” Stamps,” 5–21.

⁹² Jane Cahill, “Rosette Stamped Handles,” in *Excavations at the City of David*, ed. D.T. Ariel, *Qedem* (Jerusalem: Institute of Archeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2000).

⁹³ Roger S. Nam, “Power Relations in the Samaria Ostraca,” *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* (forthcoming).

⁹⁴ The interpretation of the Samaria ostraca revolves around the function of the *lamed* prefix. Yigael Yadin, Frank Moore Cross and Ivan Kaufman all contend that the *lamed*-prefix personal names on the ostraca represent the property owner who paid the in-kind taxes to Samaria. Frank Moore Cross, Jr., “Ammonite Ostraca from Heshbon. Heshbon Ostraca IV–VIII,” *AUSS* 13 (1975): 1–20; Ivan T. Kaufman, “The Samaria Ostraca: An Early Witness to Hebrew Writing,” *BA* 45 (1982): 229–239. Based on parallel usage of the *lamed* in Ugaritic inscriptions, Anson Rainey counters that the individuals lived in Samaria and

drives this interpretation. The corpus only refers to two items, *yn yšn* (“aged wine”) and *šmn rḥš* (“washed oil”).⁹⁵ Both of these items are high-quality prestige items, which required extra effort and resources in production. Aged wine required multiple fermentation stages, taking up valuable storage and production resources. Washed oil refers to the first batch of oil from washing with water and skimming the top layers. Only after this small yield, production looked to more efficiency over quality. Consequently, the Israelite government used the aged wine and washed oil for gifting and building social relations, rather than large-scale redistribution. Furthermore, the specific quantities of the Samaria Ostraca are quite small, merely an *nbl*.⁹⁶ According to the most accepted identifications, the geographic distribution of the ostraca form a rough circle around the capital of Samaria within a day’s journey of five–twelve kilometers. The corpus appears to favor the geographic locations to the west, which appear politically unstable and plagued by social banditry.

Careful consideration of the Samaria Ostraca corpus suggests that it indicates a special type of redistribution, termed “competitive feasting.” In studies on ancient Titicaca, Stanish explains, “The motive in competitive feasting is not the receipt of a future equal return of wealth but rather future political gain . . . the successful host or giver may actually lose total wealth in the short term but gains power and prestige.”⁹⁷ The centralized power procured these costly, luxury items, and redistributed it to neighboring tribal leaders to solidify political hegemony in eighth century Samaria. In this sense, the Samaria Ostraca does not reveal a redistribution of large-scale specialization and commodification, but a redistribution

received in-kind payments from royal directive; Rainey, “Towards a Precise Date for the Samaria Ostraca,” *BASOR* 272 (1988): 69–74; Rainey, “The Sitz im Leben of the Samaria Ostraca,” *TA* 6 (1979): 91–94; Rainey, “Semantic Parallels to the Samaria Ostraca,” *PEQ* 102 (1970): 45–51; Rainey, “Administration in Ugarit and the Samaria Ostraca,” *IEJ* 12 (1962): 62–63. Both theories reflect a growing centralization in northern Israel. An older theory suggests that these men served as government officials recording the payments. Martin Noth, “Das Krongut der Israelitischen Könige und seine Verwaltung,” *ZDPV* 50 (1927): 219–244; William Shea, “The Date and Significance of the Samaria Ostraca,” *IEJ* 27 (1977): 16–27.

⁹⁵ Matthew Suriano, “A Fresh Reading for ‘Aged Wine’ in the Samaria Ostraca,” *PEQ* 139 (2007): 27–33; cf. Lawrence E. Stager, “The Finest Olive Oil in Samaria,” *JSS* 28 (1983): 241–245.

⁹⁶ The term appears ten times in the Hebrew Bible, always in the context of a small, transportable load: 1 Sam 1:24; 10:3; 25:1; 2 Sam 16:1; Is 30:14; Jer 13:12; 48:12; Job 38:37; Lam 4:2. *HALOT*, 664 suggests a jar, though its cognate in Ugarit suggests that the vessel was made of skin, and therefore, easily carried; cf. *DULAT*, 618.

⁹⁷ Charles Stanish, *Ancient Titicaca*, 21.

of specialized gifts to key people in exchange for political support. Whether the names preceded by a *lamed* on the ostraca represent collectors, recipients or producers, the ostraca show an inward distribution of product to the capital city of Samaria.

Similarly, the Arad Ostraca also suggest a redistributive policy beginning from the eighth century.⁹⁸ Since Judah used Arad as a strategic military fortress in pre-exilic times, the corpus reflects such military concerns, but in the context of allocating supplies to this fortress, specifically the movement of wine, oil, wheat and flour. Consider the following examples:

To Eliashib: And now, give to the Kittim, two baths of wine for four days . . . and 300 (loaves of) bread. And fill with wine and turn it over tomorrow; do not be late. And if there is still sour wine, give it to them.⁹⁹

To . . . Eliashib . . . to . . . king . . . troop . . . silver . . . and the command of the king is with you as a matter of your life. Now I send in order to solemnly admonish you; today the men (are) with Elisha, lest Edom go there.¹⁰⁰

The letters show the Arad fortress relying on a central authority for decisions related to the distribution of economic resources. The second example specifically admonishes the recipient on the authority of the king and ties the redistribution to military threat. Other sites (in the north: Hazor, Tell Qasile, Beth Shean, Bethsaida, Tell el'Oreimah, Megiddo and Tel Dan; in the south: Lachish, Mezad Hashavyahu, Kadesh Barnea, Tel Beersheba, Tel 'Ira, Horvat 'Uza, Jerusalem) have ostraca dating to the eighth century that may reflect similar centralization.¹⁰¹ This explosion of epigraphic activity points to a development of literacy to support large-scale centralization necessary for a redistributive economy.

Aside from the extant texts that point to redistribution, archaeology also shows a burgeoning international trade with evidence previously absent in Iron IIA. The presence of luxury items, particularly the hoard of Samaria ivories suggests redistribution.¹⁰² In order to procure these non-indigenous preciousities, Israel had to export agricultural surplus in large

⁹⁸ Yohanan Aharoni, *Arad Inscriptions*, trans. Ben-Or (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1981). Also F.W. Dobbs-Allsopp et al., *Hebrew Inscriptions: Texts from the Biblical Period of the Monarchy with Concordance* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), 5–108.

⁹⁹ Arad 2; Aharoni, *Arad Inscriptions*, 15.

¹⁰⁰ Arad 24; Aharoni, *Arad Inscriptions*, 49.

¹⁰¹ Dobbs-Allsopp et al., *Hebrew Inscriptions*.

¹⁰² Ron E. Tappy, *The Archaeology of Israelite Samaria, Volume II: The Eighth Century BCE*, (HSS 50, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2001).

quantities, presumably requiring a centralized directive and redistribution of resources to achieve such a directive. Although dating the ivories is difficult, as many of them are heirlooms, passed from one generation to another, they generally appear to arise out of a ninth and eighth century provenance. Settlement patterns also suggest a high degree of centralization. Despite the frequent wars with the Aramaean Kingdom, the stability of the Omri-Ahab dynasty and the close relationship with Phoenicia executed a deliberate economic plan, which necessitated regional population increases. In the north, surveys of the hill country of Manasseh show a high level of both prosperity and centralization beginning in the ninth century, but reaching a fulcrum in the eighth century.¹⁰³ Both population and agriculture presumably developed enough to require deliberate centralizing efforts to settle the desert borders and protect the fringes and roads. Lower Galilee also sees a sudden spike in settlement activity, reaching its zenith in the eighth century.¹⁰⁴

All of these archaeological developments suggest that the early state formation of Iron Age IIA reached a more comprehensive stage of redistribution in Iron Age IIB. It is tempting to look at Iron IIB with the so-called eighth century prophetic corpus, and exaggerate the intensity of specialization. While clearly more specialized than Iron IIA, the overall social structure still appears centered on the extended household.¹⁰⁵ Domestic structures still consist of the four-room house, an architectural feature of subsistence planning and not redistribution. Israel and Judah still shared many features with peasant economies. But the path to specialization was

¹⁰³ As many as 300 sites in the Manasseh survey reveal Iron Age II pottery, over 65% of these sites had no previous settlement. Zertal sees clues to this deliberate settlement of unchartered lands in biblical texts such as Ahab "and all the cities that he built" (1 Kgs 22:39). Adam Zertal, "The Heart of the Monarchy: Pattern of Settlement and Historical Considerations of the Israelite Kingdom of Samaria," in *Studies in the Archaeology of the Iron Age in Israel and Jordan*, 38–64.

¹⁰⁴ Zvi Gal, *Lower Galilee During the Iron Age* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1992). The Akko plain also witnesses a relatively sudden increase in centralization in that many of the small villages of Iron I disappear and assimilate into the urban center of Akko. Gunnar Lehmann states, "The Iron Age II settlement pattern is characterized by one centralized system which dominated both the hill country and the mountain sites from its centres in the plain." See Lehmann, "Phoenicians in Western Galilee: First Results of an Archaeological Survey in the Hinterland of Akko," in *Studies in the Archaeology of the Iron Age in Israel and Jordan*, 90.

¹⁰⁵ Lawrence E. Stager, "The Archaeology of the Family in Ancient Israel," *BASOR* 260 (1985): 1–35; cf. Avraham Faust, "The Social Structure of the Israelite Society During the 8th–7th Centuries BCE According to the Archaeological Evidence" (Ph.D. diss., Bar-Ilan University, 1999).

not yet finished, and Judah would reach its culmination under Assyrian hegemony in the next century. Once they conquered the land, the political setting shifted from immanent threat to hegemonic influence, further advancing redistribution as a major exchange mechanism of the Israelite economy.

4.1.c. *Iron Age IIC (732/701–605/587 BCE): Foreign Hegemony*

After the invasions of the Neo-Assyrians devastated much of the landscape, the rebuilding efforts quickly established a new political structure under Assyrian rule. Judah retained restricted independence, yet they were essentially vassals under Neo-Assyrian hegemony. In other words, Judah needed to comply with the political and economic redistributive policies of their overlords. Within these circumstances of Iron IIC, the Southern Levant reached a pinnacle of redistribution through wide-scale economic specialization.

During this period, the Assyrian policies directly and indirectly caused major population shifts in the Southern Levant, particularly in many of the desert fringes. The mass of refugees in the wake of Assyrian destruction helped to fuel much of this growth. The Judaeen Desert, largely uninhabited for many millennia, began a period of active settlement in the seventh century, particularly at En Gedi, Rugm el-Bahr, Qumran, Khirbet Mazim / Qasr el-Yahud, Ein el-Guweir, Ein el-Turaba, as well as other oases north and along the Buqe'ah Valley.¹⁰⁶ In addition to the Judaeen Desert, many new sites suddenly appeared throughout the Negev: Tel Masos, Tel Ira, Aroer, Khirbet Uza and Khirbet Radum.¹⁰⁷ The expansion of these settlement frontiers was balanced by the population reduction in other areas. For example, the Shephelah saw a decrease in sites by 86% from Iron IIB to IIC, only explainable by a centralized directive.¹⁰⁸ In the north, many towns were abandoned or left in ruins, a testament to the mass deportations of the Neo-Assyrians with the exception of the resurgent Megiddo, the Assyrian provincial capital, with lesser settlements in Dan, Hazor and Chinnereth.

¹⁰⁶ For a general survey of the Judaeen desert settlement, see Faust and Weiss, "Judah, Philistia, and the Mediterranean World," 71–92; Israel Finkelstein, "The Archaeology of the Days of Manasseh," 169–187.

¹⁰⁷ Finkelstein, "The Archaeology of the Days of Manasseh," 169–187; Finkelstein, *Living on the Fringe*.

¹⁰⁸ Gitin, "The Neo-Assyrian Empire and Its Western Periphery," 86.

Whereas the settlement in the Judaeen Desert attests to the mass refugees, the cause for settlement in the Negev is more controversial. Traditionally, scholars thought that Neo-Assyrian interests likely drove a more deliberate deportation in the Negev. The major Assyrian style buildings at Tell Jemmeh suggest that it served as the center for administration during Iron IIC.¹⁰⁹ Tell el-Hesi has a large amount of imitation Assyrian palace ware that matches contemporary typologies from Khirbet Qasrij, Iraq.¹¹⁰ Other Assyrian-style ware appears in Tel Beersheba, Tel 'Ira and Tel Malhata (VI). This locally-made Assyrian ware did not serve the indigenous population, but rather Assyrian officials.¹¹¹ Militarily, this population movement may have served defensive purposes particularly in building Judah as a buffer state to Egypt. Many of the fortifications of Judah were completely rebuilt in the wake of Sennacherib's destructions, yet most of the northern defense systems remained in ruins. By concentrating into fewer cities, the Assyrians could more easily effectively focus their grip on distant lands, and quell potential rebellion. Presumably, Judah also had to help supply troops to Ashurbanipal to put down a rebellion in Egypt.¹¹² All of these measures require a strong central authority to divert resources in order to provide a network of defense.

More recent studies highlight the economic benefits of settlement of the Negev. Although the deliberate resettlement certainly had military strategy in mind, the evidence and social conditions support economic initiative as the primary motivation for Iron IIC resettlement. Finkelstein concludes that the process of desert settlement expanded the cultivable land, estimating that the Beersheba valley could produce 5,000 tons of grain per year.¹¹³ In addition to this agricultural productivity, the Negev expansion facilitated control over the lucrative Arabian trade routes.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ Gus Van Beek, "Jemmeh" in *OEANE*, 213–215.

¹¹⁰ Christine M.A. Engstrom, "The Neo-Assyrians at Tell-Hesi: A Petrographic Study of Imitation Assyrian Palace Ware," *BASOR* 333 (2004): 69–81.

¹¹¹ These sites all have Assyrian ware from the Iron IIB, suggesting the Assyrian influence from the eighth century. Thareani-Sussely, "The 'Archaeology of the Days of Manasseh' Reconsidered," 69–77.

¹¹² *ANET* 294; thus scholars postulate on a seventh century setting for Deut 28:68; see Miller, Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, 431.

¹¹³ Finkelstein, "The Archaeology of the Days of Manasseh," 169–187.

¹¹⁴ Some scholars see the prime motivation for Assyrian expansion is the access to tolls. Nadav Na'aman, "The Negev in the Last Century of the Kingdom of Judah (Hebrew)," *Cathedra* 42 (1987): 3–15, Thareani-Sussely, "The 'Archaeology of the Days of Manasseh' Reconsidered," 69–77; Thareani-Sussely, "Ancient Caravanserai: An Archaeological View from 'Aroer,'" *Levant* 39 (2007): 123–141; Ryan Byrne, "Early Assyrian Contacts with Arabs and the Impact on Levantine Vassal Tribute," *BASOR* 331 (2003): 11–25. John Holladay

The active control of these routes fits with the Assyrian royal policy of opening trade in distant lands. Certainly, the Assyrians were well aware of the financial potential of these desert thoroughfares, as they also attempted to integrate the Edomite tribal kingdoms into the Neo-Assyrian trade sphere.¹¹⁵ With this interpretation, the Arabian Peninsula served as a bridge much more than a barrier.¹¹⁶ In fact, pottery forms suggest that the trade involved the local Negev population more than foreign polities.¹¹⁷ A recent study via “social awareness” theory shows that the diversified tribes maintain their cultural identities, while coalescing into a greater overarching identity.¹¹⁸ All of these interpretations connect the development of fringe towns with greater economic expansion.

In addition to the expansion into the desert fringes, the Philistine coast developed into a major maritime and production center. Ekron grew into the second largest city in Judah. Specifically, the olive industry at Ekron gives the clearest example of redistributive specialization, beginning at the start of the seventh century.¹¹⁹ With over one hundred oil presses in only 3% of the tell excavated, Ekron is the single largest production center in all of the pre-modern Middle East, reaching oil capacities many times beyond the local consumption. The additional presence of loom weights suggests a deliberate plan for alternate textile production during periods outside of the normal olive oil producing season. Iron IIC Ashkelon reveals an industrial winery: several well-plastered vats, and an extensive ceramic collection of locally-made commercial jars, presumably for

asserts that the Judaeans controlled this trade, thus supplying this nation the ability to pay off enormous tribute to the Neo Assyrians; Holladay, “Hezekiah’s Tribute, Long-Distance Trade and the Wealth of Nations,” 309–331.

¹¹⁵ Piotr Bienkowski, Eveline van der Steen, “Tribes, Trade, and Towns: A New Framework for the Late Iron Age in Southern Jordan and the Negev,” *BASOR* 323 (2001): 21–47.

¹¹⁶ Piotr Bienkowski, “Landscape, Identity and Reciprocal Relations: The Wadi Arabah as Relationship and Discourse,” in *Up to the Gates of Ekron: Essays on the Archaeology and History of the Eastern Mediterranean in Honor of Seymour Gitin*, ed. Sidnie White Crawford (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2007), 407–422.

¹¹⁷ Tebes, “Iron Age ‘Negevite’ Pottery,” 95–117; Tebes “Assyrian, Judaeans, Pastoral Groups, and the Trade Patterns in the Late Iron Age Negev,” 619–631.

¹¹⁸ Yifat Thareani, “The Spirit of Clay: ‘Edomite Pottery’ and Social Awareness in the Late Iron Age,” *BASOR* 359 (2010): 35–55.

¹¹⁹ Gitin’s early seventh century interpretations of the Ekron facilities have been contested. Stager believes that Egypt’s insatiable appetite for olive oil stimulated this production. Lawrence Stager, “The Fury of Babylon: Ashkelon and the Archaeology of Destruction,” *BAR* 22, no. 1 (1996): 56–69, 76–77; David Schloen has said that the presence of these installations cannot necessarily lead to assumptions on productions but rather that oil production remained a domestic affair; Schloen, *The House of the Father*, 142.

exporting.¹²⁰ Overall, these Philistine cities saw an unparalleled economic specialization in the Southern Levant. Unlike the Negev Iron IIC, the lack of Assyrian pottery suggests that the Phoenicians drove this expansion. Under Neo-Assyrian hegemony, many cities likely retained a measure of independence in direct proportion to their economic potential. With their access to the seas and maritime acumen, the evidence suggests that Phoenicians were left largely to themselves and consequently given the freedom to expand as necessary.¹²¹ Thereby, the Phoenicians established a trading sphere into the Far West, helping to supply luxury items to the Assyrians.¹²²

Thus, Iron Age IIC witnesses a period of Neo-Assyrian influence that moves the Southern Levant towards more intense specialization. Regardless of the level of hegemonic influence, the material culture of Judah reveals a pattern of deliberate settlement for the primary purpose of large-scale economic specialization. In some areas such as the Negev, the Assyrians may have taken a direct approach to the settlement. In others places like Ashkelon, the Assyrians let the countries rule quite autonomously in recognizing the need for partnership more than coercion. Economically, through refugees and deliberate settlement, the Iron Age IIC witnessed the dissolution of the traditional economic unit of the patrimonial family. Previously during the Late Bronze Age, economic decisions were made on the basis of individual units, whether on a small-scale extended family or a fictive kinship unit like a clan or even polity. These units were largely diversified and made decisions on distribution based on social relationships. The severe population shifts and movements by the Neo-Assyrians effectively eroded these kinship groups, thereby eradicating their

¹²⁰ The recent discovery of two shipwrecks in the deep waters of Ashkelon in the eighth century confirms the presence of specialized wine production by the beginning of Iron IIC. Each ship had Phoenician characteristics, and carried about four hundred amphorae of wine. This contrasts sharply to the diverse cargo of the Late Bronze Age shipwrecks of Uluburum and Cape Gelidonya; Lawrence Stager, "Ashkelon and the Archaeology of Destruction: Kislev 604 BCE," *Eretz-Israel* 25 (1996): 61–74; Stager, "The Fury of Babylon," 56–69, 76–77; Robert D. Ballard, Stager, Daniel Master, Dana Yoerger, David Mindell, Louis L. Whitcomb, Hanumant Singh and Dennis Piechota, "Iron Age Shipwrecks in Deep Water Off Ashkelon, Israel," *AJA* 106 (2002): 151–168.

¹²¹ Susan Frankenstein, "The Phoenicians in the Far West: A Function of Neo-Assyrian Imperialism," in *Power and Propaganda: A Symposium on Ancient Empires*, ed. Mogens Trolle Larsen (Copenhagen: Akademisk, 1979), 263–294.

¹²² Christine Thompson has challenged the viewpoint of an eighth century expansion, arguing that it began in the eleventh century based on isotope analysis on Levantine silver hoards. Christine Thompson, "Silver in the Age of Iron and the Orientalizing Economies of Archaic Greece" (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 2007).

economic ties. This made the dominance of the redistributive mode that more pervasive, and set the stage for further shifts in economic structures to be explored in Chapter Five. The latter periods of Egyptian and Neo-Babylonian rule continued to maintain a policy of redistribution through specialization.

In summary, archaeological evidence suggests that the Iron Age II Levant witnessed a gradual move to a more redistributive economy. Although certainly not the sole economic mechanism, redistribution regulated man of the allocation of resources both on domestic and international levels. This movement need not always develop teleologically, but the historical circumstances of the Iron II facilitated a relatively linear progression for ancient Israel. These same conditions can help to account for the portrayal of redistribution as a major exchange mechanism within 1 and 2 Kings.

4.2. *State Redistribution*

The book of Kings provides many examples of royal redistribution. Because the text ultimately concerns itself with the promotion of the Davidic monarchy and explanation for the events of exile, the focus lies strongly with the reigns of each king, with special attention to theological judgments. The action of redistribution only occurs with a centralized power, primarily the royal government, though sometimes with the temple. Whereas the material culture suggests a relatively linear progression towards centralization during Iron Age II, of course, the correlation to the actual historical development of Israelite statehood and the formation of biblical literature is controversial. Because of the nature of ancient royal historiography compared to material culture, both sources will inevitably paint different pictures of life in Iron Age II. But at a minimum, the preceding material culture can serve as an illustration to better sense the nature of redistribution as portrayed in the biblical text.

4.2.a. *Solomonic Redistribution*

Although Southern Levantine material culture suggests that the movement to centralization occurred throughout most of the entire Iron Age II, portrayals of domestic redistribution within 1 and 2 Kings fall almost exclusively to the reign of Solomon. Participation within great trade networks and the magnificent temple required that all peoples within the land made contributions towards the center. In 1 Kings 4:7, the twelve

prefects of the United Monarchy have the responsibility to provide the substantial foodstuffs to sustain the royal house. 1 Kings 5:27–32 describe the conscription of labor to procure the massive amounts of temple materials. 1 Kings 8:62–63 recount the enormous livestock sacrifices brought to Jerusalem for the temple dedication upon its completion. Solomon continues the centralization policy via a massive royal building program, erecting defense installations throughout the country as reported in 1 Kings 9:15–32. All of these actions have major economic consequences for the rest of the country. Most importantly, a single, centralized entity, the royal house of Solomon, makes and administers these redistribution decisions.

Historical questions over the purported forty-year reign of Solomon in the tenth century constitute some of the most contentious debates in biblical studies and Levantine archaeology. This section will argue that the portrayals of Solomon reflect a limited historical reality, in that a major polity emerged in the tenth century, and administered redistribution and meager long-distance trade activity. Consequently, the compiler of the DtrH did not completely fabricate a fictional United Monarchy, but relied on sources with limited historical value. The magnitude of this polity, however, falls short of the grand portrayal of the DtrH. The pre-exilic redactor reworked older, pro-monarchic material to fit a shifting theological message on a materially abundant ideal empire, whose royal lineage continues in Hezekiah and Josiah. While sorting through the cognitive dissonance of exile, a later DtrH redactor again reworked the narrative to subvert this pristine portrait in explaining the events of 587 BCE.

The beginning of this chapter presented a case for the transition to redistribution to begin in Iron IIA, as reflected in centralized architecture and more deliberate settlements. Such a development is fully accepted on both sides of the high-low chronology debate. It is important to remember that even under Mazar's expanded Iron IIA chronology, this period covers a relatively short 140–150 years. With limited data on this period, one can only speculate on the beginnings of redistributive efforts within this narrow timeframe. Based on the current evidence, it appears that the tenth century does indeed appear as a reasonable setting for the disputed "Solomonic" strata than the ninth century. The reduction of the tenth century social groups to mere chiefdoms cannot account for the sudden emergence of a sophisticated state in the ninth century that ends Iron Age IIA. Textually, one must also take into account the plausibility of biblical textualization in relation to historicity. The extreme reductionist view of the tenth century Israel requires the Josianic עַם הָאָרֶץ ("people of the land") to completely fabricate a United Monarchy period, and have

such an narrative receive widespread acceptance. One could expect for cultural memory to serve as a barometer, however so slight, to insure a modicum of historicity in the United Monarchy as portrayed by the DtrH. Thus, establishing the Solomonic polity as a legitimate redistributive policy appears sensible in light of the archaeological evidence.¹²³

The redistribution of foodstuffs for the royal house in 1 Kings 4:7–19, in particular, supports a level of authenticity to the historical United Monarchy. Halpern suggests that the administrative districts of Solomon as authentic and much more sensible during the tenth century than during later periods of Judaeon rule.¹²⁴ Several of the sites, such as Tanaach, Abel Meholah and Jezreel have tenth century settlement, but show no occupation after the mid-ninth century, thus making it doubtful that they would appear on a list later than the ninth century. In following this list, Solomon tried to build caravanserais along the Negev and the northern Sinai to force traffic into Israelite states, rather than allow progress to the coastal cities. Jeffrey Blakely strengthens this thesis by observing that the description of borders in 1 Kings 4:7–19 matches the geographic space of eleventh and tenth century sites that contained tripartite pillared buildings.¹²⁵

At the same time, the Solomonic kingdom is more meager than the DtrH portrayal. For this study, the lack of evidence for international imports contradicts the extensive international trade. Chapter Five will examine this area more thoroughly, but for now, suffice it to say that the fantastic wealth seems more ideologically projection, and more reflective of the Neo-Assyrian splendor than any historical United Monarchy of Iron IIA. Some of the verses clearly represent sweeping exaggeration such as the claim of “He had dominion over all the region west of the Euphrates from Tiphseh to Gaza, over all the kings west of the Euphrates.”¹²⁶ This assertion effectively includes all of Philistia, Phoenicia, the Aramaean Kingdom and the Transjordanian states. Such a vast kingdom contradicts Solomon’s later encounters with foreign polities within these borders. In fact, it does not even match the administrative divisions of 1 Kings 4:7–19.

¹²³ Archaeologically, Mazar summarizes many of the difficulties of the low chronology, particularly in regard to the wholesale lowering of pottery on the Philistia coast. See Mazar, “The Debate over the Chronology of the Iron Age,” 15–30.

¹²⁴ Halpern, *David’s Secret Demons*, 474.

¹²⁵ Jeffrey A. Blakely, “Reconciling Two Maps: Archaeological Evidence for the Kingdoms of David and Solomon,” *BASOR* 327 (2002): 49–54.

¹²⁶ 1 Kgs 5:3.

But the portrayal of redistribution in the Solomonic empire serves a vital analogy for the ideological intentions of both the pre-exilic and exilic DtrH. The compiler of the pre-exilic DtrH sought to show a glorious royal heritage for Hezekiah and Josiah. For this purpose, redistributive policies contribute to the overall portrait of wealth and splendor to Solomon. In other words, the pre-exilic compiler gives a largely positive portrayal of the centralization efforts. The narrative language emphasizes an implicit equality to the redistribution. In 1 Kings 4:7, the prefects of Solomon are responsible for feeding the royal family, but each official must provide for only one month per year.¹²⁷ The text gives a slightly modified version of tribal divisions, balancing the economic strength between districts.¹²⁸ Whatever the specific reason, these newly reorganized tribal boundaries have an effect of balancing out the economic strength for each district. Sweeney notes that the strong tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh lose valuable trade routes.¹²⁹ The containment of Gad presumably increases the strength of Gilead Bashan and Gilead Reuben who both had hostile Aram-Damascus at their borders. With such a restructuring, the single month provision per tribe is now a fair practice. The relative value of this redistributive tax is now much more equitable.

In addition to the sustenance of the royal household, Solomon conscripts corvée labor of 30,000 men.¹³⁰ Although seemingly large, the number is proportionally immaterial compared to the purported general population of 800,000 men in Israel and 500,000 in Judah.¹³¹ According to these exaggerated figures, only one out of every forty-two men served in corvée service. Furthermore, the conscripted men work in shifts of every third month, thus allowing even the conscripted labor to still spend two out of every three months working on their family land. The listing of

¹²⁷ Despite recent claims, the DtrH likely reworked an early tradition into 1 Kings 4:7–19: (1) the district list has significant inconsistencies in organizational style, wavering between topographical descriptions, cities and tribes; (2) explanatory Deuteronomistic glosses appear in verses 13 and 19; Cogan, *1 Kings*, 209; (3) this list structurally resembles older Bronze Age lists from Ugarit and Alalakh. For a similar discussion; Richard Hess, “The Form and Structure of the Solomonic District List in 1 Kings 4:7–19,” in *Crossing Borders and Linking Horizons*, eds. G.D. Young, Mark W. Chavalas, and Richard Averbeck (Bethesda: CDL Press, 1997), 279–292. For similar discussion on the literary providence, see G. Ernest Wright, “The Provinces of Solomon (1 Kings 4:7–19),” *Eretz-Israel* 62 (1967), 58–68.

¹²⁸ For other positions on the tribal revision, see Albrecht Alt, “Menschen Ohne Namen,” in *Kleine Schriften* (München: Beck, 1959), 198–213; G. Ernest Wright, “The Provinces of Solomon,” 58–68; Sweeney, *1 and 2 Kings*, 88–95.

¹²⁹ Sweeney, *1 and 2 Kings*, 89–95.

¹³⁰ 1 Kgs 5:27.

¹³¹ 2 Sam 24:9; all of the figures are certainly hyperbolic.

70,000 porters and 80,000 rock-cutters presumably receive full pay for their service. In addition, skilled laborers from Tyre joined the Israelites.¹³² For 1 Kings 3–8, Solomon's redistributive policy contains some intent of portraying egalitarianism and fairness.

Alongside all of this special attention to equality, the DtrH also gives a sense of abundance that mitigates any financial hardship that may arise from royal redistribution measures. The entire temple building narrative begins with the syntactically independent phrase in 1 Kings 4:20:

יְהוּדָה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל רַבִּים כְּחֹל אֲשֶׁר-עַל-הַיָּם לֶרֶב אֹכְלִים וְשָׂתִים וְשִׂמְחִים:

Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sands by the sea, eating, drinking and rejoicing in abundance.

This phrase invokes the covenantal promise to Abraham.¹³³ The reference to the patriarchal promise appropriately begins the discussion of Solomon's vast wealth and his rule over both northern Israel and southern Judah. The last phrase of the verse states that the nation was "eating, drinking and rejoicing," implying a sense of full provision.¹³⁴

According to 1 Kings 5, this abundance comes to Israel through both tribute and shrewd economic decisions. Solomon's vast territory extends to the entire land west of the Euphrates to the southern border of Egypt, including the Transjordan and the Philistine coast. The tribute from these vassals provided an enormous daily ration for Solomon and his court: thirty kors of fine flour, sixty kors of meal, ten fattened cattle, twenty range cattle, one hundred sheep, along with unspecified gazelles, deer, roebuck and fattened geese.¹³⁵ In addition, Solomon had 40,000 horse stalls and 12,000 horses, all well-fed with barley and straw. Ultimately, the text states that the wisdom of Solomon explicitly leads to political peace, stability and centralized wealth.¹³⁶

¹³² 1 Kgs 5:32.

¹³³ This opening nominal phrase of 1 Kgs 4:20 distinguishes itself in content and form from the previous verses focused on the administration of Solomon. Sweeney, *1 and 2 Kings*, 98. Cf. Gen 22:17; 32:13.

¹³⁴ Eccl 8:15 later invokes this phrase as a description of a life of great wealth.

¹³⁵ Estimations of the feeding capacity vary from 3,000 to 34,000. Sweeney, *1 and 2 Kings* 99.

¹³⁶ Although the text highlights the abundance from YHWH, it also shows moderation to the royal house. In 1 Kgs 4:7, the text states that the prefects "sustain" (כֹּלֵל) the royal house. The pilpel stem of כֹּלֵל denotes sustenance and not indulgence. The form otherwise appears in examples of Joseph feeding his family through years of famine and the sustenance of itinerant prophets; Gen 45:11; 47:12; 1 Kgs 17:4–9; 18:4, 13; 20:22.

Most importantly, 1 Kings 6–8 justifies redistribution by explicitly stating that the benefits of the centralization measures go directly to the glory of YHWH through the construction of a grand temple. The lengthy narrative focuses on material largess to reflect the splendor of YHWH rather than precise architectural details. The woods arrive from the vast forests in the Lebanese mountains.¹³⁷ The foundations comprise of גִּדּוֹל (“huge”) and יָקָר (“precious”) stones.¹³⁸ Other biblical passages juxtapose “precious stones” with items like spices and gold.¹³⁹ The DtrH exaggerates the description of an entire foundation inlaid with precious stones of eight to ten cubits in size!¹⁴⁰ Solomon also overlays most of the temple and its furnishings with gold including the interior of the *debir*, the cedar altar, the interior house, the cherubim, the inner and outer floors, the double door, the carvings and many of the furnishings.¹⁴¹ Gold is abundant throughout the building, and not just regular gold, but זָהָב סָגוֹר (“shut gold”), possibly referring to a purer form.¹⁴² The bronze vessels were so numerous that they did not bother to weigh them.¹⁴³ The later exilic edition would turn this material emphasis into a tragedy when describing the material loss of the temple objects to Babylon.¹⁴⁴

The larger literary context of 1 Kings 6–8 within the Solomonic narratives emphasizes the glory and grandeur of the house of YHWH. The construction of the temple and its dedication is the crowning achievement of Solomon. The insertion of the royal palace though much larger in size, receives a proportionally insignificant space in the narrative, and its secondary insertion breaks up the focus on the temple. Whether such a temple accurately reflects an actual Solomonic temple, the DtrH highlights the material splendor of the temple within the sacred location of Jerusalem. Such lavish description of the temple legitimizes the centralization process. After the description of the gold and “shut gold” furnishings of the temple, DtrH explains that these materials came as sacred donations to his father, thus supporting the redistributive centralization.¹⁴⁵

¹³⁷ 1 Kgs 5:15–26.

¹³⁸ 1 Kgs 5:31; 7:9–11.

¹³⁹ 2 Sam 12:30; 1 Kgs 10:10,11; Ezek 27:22; Dan 11:38.

¹⁴⁰ The phrase “choice stone” could also refer to the fine ashlar masonry evident throughout Iron IIA; Barkay, “The Iron Age II–III,” 387.

¹⁴¹ 1 Kgs 6:20–21; 7:48–50.

¹⁴² 1 Kgs 6:20–22, 28, 30, 32; 7:48–50.

¹⁴³ 1 Kgs 7:47.

¹⁴⁴ 2 Kgs 25:13–17.

¹⁴⁵ These donations did not go to Solomon, but rather DtrH explains “Solomon brought in the sacred donations of his father David—the silver, the gold, and the vessels—and deposited them in the treasury of the House of the LORD.” 1 Kgs 7:51.

This centralization directly benefited all citizens in bringing the presence of the transcendent deity near the people. This portrayal matches the pre-exilic textualization as it befits the ideology of both Hezekiah and Josiah. Both of these kings needed to create support for a centralization that ran counter to the natural tribal subdivisions and local sanctuaries. Under monarchic sponsorship, the text serves as propaganda to support the vast centralization efforts of ancient Israel. Rather than emphasizing oppressiveness and inequity associated with centralization, the DtrH chooses to highlight abundance and dedication to YHWH. The text also shows the practical measures of redistribution, as it not only protects from marauding polities, but it also helps maintain such vast control.¹⁴⁶

But even despite the ideological intents to promote a eulogistic understanding of Solomon's vast wealth commensurate with his wisdom and blessing, the text also contains hints of oppression in the redistributive efforts. In particular, the terminology of the forced service identifies the oppressive nature of Solomonic redistribution. The text primarily uses the terms *מס* and *מס עובד* ("forced labor" or "corvée"), which refers to labor that is oppressive towards individuals with reduced social standing. Although its origin is unknown, the cognates in western peripheral Akkadian (*massu*; Mari, Alalah, Ugarit, Amarna) assume a forced servitude.¹⁴⁷ Other biblical usages of the term emphasize that the ones in power forced this labor without concern for the actual workers.¹⁴⁸ The use of the as a predicate Hiphil *עלה* underscores the oppressive nature of the service.¹⁴⁹ Most telling about the oppressive nature of the corvée, 1 Kgs 5:27 identifies the forced laborers as coming *מכל-ישראל* ("from the whole of Israel"). The Chronicler changes this term to the *כל-האנשים הגרים אשר בארץ ישראל* ("from the whole of the foreign residents").¹⁵⁰ This edit reflects the need to preserve the Chronicle's vision for a nostalgic Solomonic portrayal during Persian times, rather than one who oppresses the Israelites.

¹⁴⁶ For example, 1 Kgs 5:8 explains that the supply helped to maintain military posts, which protected the country.

¹⁴⁷ Isaac Mendelsohn, "Samuel's Denunciation of Kingship in Light of the Akkadian Documents from Ugarit," *BASOR* 143 (1956): 17–23; Anson Rainey, "Compulsory Labor Gangs in Ancient Israel," *IEJ* 20 (1970): 191–202; J. Alberto Soggin, "Compulsory Labor under David and Solomon," in *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays*, ed. T. Ishida (Tokyo: Yamakawa-Shuppansha, 1982), 259–267.

¹⁴⁸ In particular the term refers appears in the context of both pre-exodus slavery (Exod 1:11) and wartime captivity (Josh 16:10).

¹⁴⁹ "And King Solomon made (them) go to the forced labor from the whole of Israel" (*ויעל*); 1 Kgs 5:27 "And Solomon made them go to the forced labor" (*ויעלם*); 1 Kgs 9:21.

¹⁵⁰ 2 Chr 2:16.

These hints of oppression become explicit after the Deuteronomic warning of 9:1–9, as the redistributive measures of Solomon highlight the moral failure of Solomon.¹⁵¹ Whereas the earlier chapters focus on the temple as the recipient of Solomon's vast redistribution network, 1 Kings 9:15–32 emphasize secular projects: the royal house, military outposts, storage cities and royal dowry gifts. The earlier narratives highlight the construction of the temple according to the direction of YHWH, but chapter nine specifies the building program according to the חשק שלמה ("desire of Solomon").¹⁵²

More importantly, 1 Kings 9–12 does not mention abundance, but rather calls attention to the oppressive nature of redistribution. The forced labor falls heaviest on the descendants of foreigners, who remained in the land after conquest.¹⁵³ The Israelites who actually built the temple, now serve as military soldiers and officers, as well as prefects supervising the work. But 1 Kings 12 show that Israelites themselves are also subject to Solomon's oppressive redistributive measures. As soon as Solomon dies and the kingdom passes to Rehoboam, Jeroboam comes to the newly-installed king to complain and reform the harsh labor services of Solomon. Specifically, Jeroboam states that "Your father made difficult (hiphil of קשה√) for us," deliberating using the language of the slavery in Egypt.¹⁵⁴ The elders to Rehoboam confirm the legitimacy of the people's concerns by advising the king to ease up on the required labor measures. But the arrogance and callousness of Rehoboam's response serves to highlight the oppressive redistribution and justifies the eventual secession of the Northern Kingdom.¹⁵⁵ The king does not recognize the role of God in ascribing wealth

¹⁵¹ Scholars remain divided over the transition between "good" and "bad" Solomon. In the past many scholars saw the beginning of his downfall in 1 Kgs 11:1. See James A. Montgomery and Henry Snyder Gehman, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Kings*, (ICC, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1951), 203–204. More recently, more scholars see 9:1 as the beginning of his moral failure. Others highlight the interweaving of positive and negative portrayals of Solomon throughout all of 1 Kings 1–11. Still others now see much of the narrative as subversively negative; Noth, *Könige* 92–99.

¹⁵² 1 Kgs 9:19.

¹⁵³ Based on the other two uses of "forced labor" (מס עבד), the corvée for these foreigners may serve a harsher punishment than the mere corvée for the Israelites; Gen 49:15; Josh 16:10. The main issue of the passage, however, is that the Israelites built the holy temple, and the Canaanites built the secular projects. See Seibert, *Subversive Scribes and the Solomonic Narrative*, 145.

¹⁵⁴ 1 Kgs 12:4; cf. Exod 1:14; 6:9; 7:3; 13:15. The allusions to Egyptian captivity often serve as an explanatory model for the exilic period.

¹⁵⁵ Rehoboam's response gives the sarcastic and hyperbolic response, "My little finger is thicker than my father's loins. My father imposed a heavy yoke on you, and I will add

and greatness to the kingdom. Rather, the young ruler appears to believe that his own strength and fortitude have created the nation, thus giving him the right to subjugate the people.

In reworking older, pro-monarchic material to fit a shifting theological message, different periods of the DtrH give a mixed review to domestic redistribution. 1 Kings 5–8 characterize the centralization efforts with abundance, equity and devotion to YHWH. But from 1 Kings 9, the centralization is secular, oppressive and eventually results in the schism of the kingdom. Despite this outward ideological intent, the Iron II archaeological evidence suggests a degree of historicity to this redistribution in the centralized building program, and the settlement patterns.

4.2.b. *Temple Redistribution*

A key component of ancient Near Eastern redistribution centers on the temple. Both sanctioned and unsanctioned excavations in Mesopotamia and Egypt have yielded significant cuneiform archives that have brought awareness to the importance of the temple to the overall economic life. These discoveries alongside the impressive discoveries of temple precincts and religious texts have provided scholars with substantial sources for understanding temple economy.

In fact, the earliest Mesopotamian studies on the temple promulgated the idea that the temple served as sole economic entity for the various polities throughout Mesopotamian history, or a “temple-state theory,” advanced by Anton Deimel.¹⁵⁶ This viewpoint dominated much of the reconstructions of southern Mesopotamian cities, partially as scholars failed to understand the bias of evidence towards the temple and that this evidence did not properly account for other sectors of the city. Although

to your yoke; my father flogged you with whips, but I will flog you with scorpions,” (1 Kgs 12:11). Michael Fishbane argues a later redactor weaved this verse as an anti-dynastic *ex eventu* prediction; Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (New York: Clarendon and Oxford University, 1985), 470.

¹⁵⁶ Anton Deimel and his student, Anna Schneider, conducted some of the more provocative research on ancient Near Eastern temple economies based on the Lagash temple. They argue that the temple-state was the center of economic power in the ancient Near East, and scholars have used their theories to cover other periods and places. Their theory is flawed in that they do not account for the bias of the temple evidence. It is much more reasonable to think about the temple economy rising in parallel and sometimes in opposition to royal economic redistribution. See Anna Schneider, *Die Anfänge der Kulturwirtschaft: Die Sumerische Tempelstadt* (Essen: Baedeker, 1920). For an overview of ancient Near Eastern temple economy, see Benjamin R. Foster, “A New Look at the Sumerian Temple State,” *JESHO* 24 (1981): 225–241.

subsequent research identifies distinct, non-cultic economic spheres, the temple certainly remains an important economic institution with vast redistributive power.¹⁵⁷ Most scholars see that the temples had redistributory power through its self-proclaimed image as a divine household.¹⁵⁸ This paradigm of household presents the temple as a self-sustaining entity requiring economic support for maintaining the household: feeding the staff, building and rebuilding temples, cult statues and cultic paraphernalia. Many documents also signify the institutions of sacrifices as well as food offerings. Most significantly, documents record the donation of gifts from individuals to the temple, ranging from high prestige items, to plain animals with silver items as the most frequently listed gift. Several of the temples have archives that document the collection of various goods through a religious festival and the subsequent redistribution of such goods.¹⁵⁹

Similar to the Mesopotamian temples, the temples of Egypt had a complex system of needs, collection and subsequent redistribution. By nature of Egyptian religion, Pharaoh carried supreme responsibility for the creation and upkeep of the temples, and he was solely qualified to carry out temple cultic functions. Although the various temples differed in power and administrative method, most of the temples received their financial support through land. For example, the New Kingdom Wilbur Papyrus divides temple lands into larger "domains" (*rmnjt*), under the management of temple officials. The yields of the lands then split between the individual supply of the farms (70%) with the remainder (30%) kept by the temple. Smaller farms had significantly smaller net yields for the temple, but they likely served other needs, such as providing for the various temple personnel. The archaeology of the New Kingdom temple may also support vast redistribution from grain. The New Kingdom temple in western Thebes, and Seti I's temple at Abydos, both contain adjacent graneries. Other temples, such as Amun-Re at Karnak, have epigraphic collections that attest official graneries, though they have yet to be discovered.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ John F. Robertson, "The Social and Economic Organization of Ancient Mesopotamian Temples" in *CANE*, 443–454; Ignace J. Gelb, "On the Alleged Temple and State Economies in Ancient Mesopotamia," in *Studi in Onore Di Edoardo Volterra* (Milano: 1969), 137–154.

¹⁵⁸ For more bibliography and explanation of the Mesopotamian temple as household see Diakonoff, "The Structure of Near Eastern Society," 7–100.

¹⁵⁹ For example the early second millennium Larsa temple shows redistribution to the central temple with allocations to the various temple personnel. Similar archive appears in the Eshumesha temple. See Robertson, "The Social and Economic Organization," 458.

¹⁶⁰ David O'Connor, "The Social and Economic Organization of Ancient Egyptian Temples" in *CANE*, 319–329.

The first millennium temples, such as the one in Jerusalem, are somewhat unique from earlier periods in that they had to exist in the wake of burgeoning empires. Recent years have produced significant gains in understanding the first millennium temple. Specifically, several scholars like Michael Kozuh and Govert van Driel acknowledge a complexity to the temple far beyond the understanding of a patriarchal model.¹⁶¹ At some points, the temple referred to itself as a household with the desire to build loyalty and devotion. At the same time, the temple had to function as an economic entity beyond the patrimonial metaphor by superceding familial lines with formality. Payments and service to the temple was required and compulsory rather than based on duty and honor. Kozuh argues that these mechanisms allowed the temple to perpetuate itself through enormous political changes in empires as well as individual micro-changes.¹⁶²

The Jerusalem temple stands in the tradition of ancient Near Eastern temple economies. They certainly collected consumable foods and received tribute. They also had temple priests to carry out cultic functions and they must have needed personnel to support these priests. They established and maintained a complex relationship with the other authoritative bodies. This relationship certainly changed and adapted as Judah existed amidst the vast Assyrian then Babylonian empire, then again as a reconstituted Temple without a Davidic monarch during the Persian function.

Many of the economic activities of the temple are not recorded in the book of Kings, even peripherally. 1 and 2 Kings records only two instances of economic centralization for the temple, during the reign of Jehoash and Josiah.¹⁶³ As pre-exilic Judaeans kings, both rule the nation in accord with the priests, and both oversee a centralization for temple upkeep and repair. The two accounts employ similar phrases and style, signifying a literary relationship between the two accounts, though the centralization results in drastically different results. In 2 Kings 12:5–17, Jehoash begins a centralization policy dedicated to temple repairs.

¹⁶¹ J.J. Janssen, "The Role of the Temple in the Egyptian Economy During the New Kingdom," in *State and Economy in the Ancient Near East*, 127–185, especially 131–151; Michael Kozuh, "Temple, Economy, and Religion in First Millennium Babylonia," *Religious Compass* 2 (2008): 929–948.

¹⁶² For example, consider the provisions for the dying of a family line; G. Van Driel, *Elusive Silver: In Search for a Role for a Market in an Agrarian Environment: Aspects of Mesopotamian Society* (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2002).

¹⁶³ Scholars disagree as to giving the textual priority to the Jehoash account or the Josiah account. See Kozuh, "Temple, Economy, and Religion," 132.

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹאָשׁ אֶל־הַכֹּהֲנִים כָּל כֶּסֶף הַקִּדְשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־יֹוֹבֵא בֵּית־יְהוָה כֶּסֶף
עֹוֵבֵר אִישׁ כֶּסֶף נַפְשׁוֹת עֲרֹכּוּ כָל־כֶּסֶף אֲשֶׁר יַעֲלֶה עַל לִב־אִישׁ לְהֵבִיא בֵּית
יְהוָה: יִקְחוּ לָהֶם הַכֹּהֲנִים אִישׁ מֵאֵת מִכְרוּ וְהֵם יַחֲזִקוּ אֶת־בֵּדֶק הַבַּיִת לְכָל
אֲשֶׁר־יִמָּצֵא שָׁם בְּדֶק:

And Joash said to the priests, "All the silver, current silver, brought into the Temple of YHWH as sacred silver—any silver a man may pay as the silver equivalent of persons, or any other silver that a man may be minded to bring to the Temple of YHWH—let the priests receive it, each from his benefactor; they, in turn, shall make repairs on the House, wherever damage may be found."¹⁶⁴

Each priest receives silver from a benefactor, then the priest then uses the silver to repair and maintain the temple.¹⁶⁵ But after twenty-three years, this policy fails to result in temple repairs, so Jehoash creates a more intricate system of bringing funds directly to a supervisor and then to appointed contractors for temple repair. This portrayal of centralization is somewhat favorable in the eyes of the DtrH. The king rebukes the official priest for fiscal neglect, and calls for changes to ensure the direct allocation of resources to the appointed contractors. The closing verse of this section states that "the men acted in honesty," and thus the process did not need of any audit controls on the treasury.¹⁶⁶

But whereas the passage gives a favorable portrayal of centralization, its placement within the DtrH makes the Jehoash temple centralization unsuccessful. The passage states that the funds eventually end up not supporting the Temple of YHWH, but rather the tribute to Hazael of Aram. With the threat of the Aramaean forces after the conquering of Gath, Jehoash used all of his funds to pay off the foreign army and send them home. Although the immediate access to this large sum allowed the survival of Jerusalem against the Aramaeans, the narrative context suggests that the centralization of the temple was an abject failure. The immanent threat of the hostile forces resulted in the forfeiture of these funds and the fiscal strengthening of Israel's enemy. Such a presentation fits the pre-exilic polemic of the DtrH against King Jehoash and his northern lineage. Although the king attempts righteous acts and restoration of the temple,

¹⁶⁴ 2 Kgs 12:5–6.

¹⁶⁵ For the difficult translation for מכרו as "his benefactor," see Gary N. Knoppers, *Two Nations under God*, 352.

¹⁶⁶ 2 Kgs 12:16.

even these good intentions cannot reach fruition since he is a king of illicit means.

Later in 2 Kings 22:5–8, King Josiah executes the temple centralization in the pattern of Jehoash. Both passages portray the redistribution in a manner reminiscent of the positive picture Solomonic redistribution towards the temple of 1 Kings 6–8. The redistribution measures for the temple are fair and honest, as *אך לא־יחשב* (“no accounting is necessary”).¹⁶⁷ This centralization policy goes directly to support the temple of YHWH. But unlike the disastrous results of the centralization associated with Jehoash, the narrative context of the Josiah temple centralization has a positive result. The execution of the normal duty of supervising the temple funds leads to the monumental discovery of the “scroll of the Torah,” and the ensuing catalyzing of religious reform.

4.2.c. *The Exception to State Redistribution: Patrimonial Land*

Redistribution was not absolute during monarchic Israel. The ruling monarchy did not have complete control of hereditary lands, following most ancient Near Eastern cultural tradition. For example, in Ugarit, the plots land intrinsically belongs to the patrimonial line.¹⁶⁸ At some cases, the royal class could facilitate transfer, but they executed such exchange only with reparations. Similarly, the biblical law codes all testify to the inalienability of land holdings to one’s kinship group.¹⁶⁹

Two passages in Kings testify to the unique nature of land as commodity not subject to royal redistributive seizure. In 1 Kings 16:24, Omri acquires the land of Samaria from a personal estate with compensation of two talents of silver.¹⁷⁰ Ancient Samaria occupied a premium geographical

¹⁶⁷ 2 Kgs 22:7; 12:16.

¹⁶⁸ The Ugarit King could only revoke lands when a subject did not adequately perform service. Overall, hereditary lands are well guarded. See McGeough, *Exchange Relationships at Ugarit*, 191–193.

¹⁶⁹ Num 27:1–11; Lev 25:8–31; Deut 25:5–10; see Baruch A. Levine, “Farewell to the Ancient Near East: Evaluating Biblical References to Ownership of Land in Comparative Perspective,” in *Privatization in the Ancient Near East and Classical World*, eds. Michael Hudson, Baruch A. Levine (Cambridge, Mass.: Peabody Museum, 1996), 232; Anson Rainey, “The Kingdom of Ugarit,” *BA* 38 (1965): 102–125. Zafira Ben-Barak, “Meribaa and the System of Land Grants in Ancient Israel,” *Bib* 62 (1981): 73–91 notes the first flagrant royal confiscation of land occurs only as a result of extreme treason when David seizes Mephibosheth’s land in 2 Sam 16:1–4, especially pp. 84–85.

¹⁷⁰ The price is quite high in comparison to other sale transactions; cf. Gen 23:16; Jer 32:9; 2 Sam 24:42. But the land carries a much higher value, as the future capital of Israel.

position, along the road running northbound from Shechem, thereby giving easy access to the Jezreel Valley and the coastal plain. The economic development of the Eastern Mediterranean littoral and the partnership with Phoenicia justifies establishing greater presence near the coastal plain, even at the expense of exposing eastern Tirzah and the Transjordan.¹⁷¹ The hill has natural fortifications, elevated about 300 feet on the north, south and west sides, and sitting atop an eastward ridge. Theologically, the purchase of Samaria parallels the takeover of Jerusalem by David in the hopes of establishing a dynastic line.¹⁷² One main difference, Benjamin Mazar suggests that Shemer's estate had ancestral ties to King Omri, legitimating the transaction.¹⁷³ Therefore, Omri can only attain the land not from a position of royalty, but as a qualified member of the owner's clan.

1 Kings 21:1–19 narrates a second example of land as a restriction to redistribution. Upon seeing a desirable plot of land, King Ahab makes a generous offer to Naboth, the owner, seemingly equitable and fair to purchase the land. When refused, the king must resort to trickery in order to procure the desired space. Although the passage emphasizes the moral wickedness of the northern king's house, the narrative presents a glimpse into the limits of royal redistribution. The king cannot obtain any land that he wishes and furthermore, he faces refusal even in the midst of a generous financial offer. Based on the narrative, it appears that Naboth's selling of his inheritance land falls within his own social rights and is acceptable, but he refuses anyways. The purchase of land is clearly much more than a supply-and-demand commodity. For Naboth, the departing of his ancestral land was unthinkable, even in the face of generous compensation and unspoken royal favor. Land is tied to one's social heritage, and therefore, transactions regarding land must give precedence to relational distance.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ Under the high chronology, excavations at Samaria (modern Sebastiyeh) reveal the first major building phase to early Iron II, reasonably attributable to the Omride dynasty.

¹⁷² Ben-Barak, "Meribaa and the System of Land Grants," 73–91.

¹⁷³ Stager concludes that Samaria originally belonged to the tribe of Issachar. Because King Omri was an Issacharite, he fulfilled his duty as the kinsman redeemer in purchasing the estate. Lawrence E. Stager, "Shemer's Estate," *BASOR* 277/278 (1990): 93–107; cf. Albrecht Alt, "The Monarchy in the Kingdom of Israel and Judah," in *Essays on Old Testament History and Religion* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1967); 103–104.

¹⁷⁴ For this reason, Jeremiah is able to redeem the land of his kinsman, and Abraham's purchase of land reads more like a social arrangement, which he rejects in favor of a commercial agreement; Gen 23:10–16; Jer 32:6–15.

The land was a gift of YHWH, thus one cannot depart from it.¹⁷⁵ These two passages confirm patriarchal land as a major exception to central redistribution in line with ancient Near Eastern culture.

4.3. *International Redistribution*

The sphere of domestic redistribution occurred within the wider phenomenon of international redistribution.¹⁷⁶ During this period of constant tension and invasion throughout the Southern Levant, 1 and 2 Kings records ten specific instances of international redistribution through war booty or tribute as a result of military action.¹⁷⁷ In these cases, Judah (and sometimes Israel) had to collect from funds either through ad hoc taxation or by draining the central temple and royal treasury. The end result was the same: the production of the individuals gathers to a center, most often the ruler of the Assyrian Empire.

The first explicit mention of international redistribution is in Ben Hadad's threat to Ahab, כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב לִי־הוּא ("Your silver and gold are mine").¹⁷⁸ For good measure, the Aramaean king also adds, וְנָשִׁים וְבָנִים ("Your wives and children,") but under this unreasonable demand, YHWH actively strengthens the Israelites to prevent the giving up tribute to the Aramaean state. Soon thereafter, YHWH again intervenes to help maintain the tribute of Moab. But Israel's unfaithfulness eventually brings defeat to the Assyrians, and the beginnings of

¹⁷⁵ Ancient Near Eastern societies developed fictive kinship relationships that eventually became the terminology of land transfer. In both Mari and Nuzi, people must be symbolically "adopted" before purchasing land. Even though these "adoptions" were completely fictive, they preserved a measure of consistency with their ideas of inalienable property. For discussion, see Benjamin Mazar, "The House of Omri," *Eretz-Israel* 20 (1989), 62–77. In this light, the response of Naboth suggests that land was in fact, under special conditions, a sellable commodity. Biblical law presupposes such stipulations in the commands of the owner buyback, kinsman redeemer and Jubilee year: Lev 25: 8–12, 25b–27, 29–31.

¹⁷⁶ Neo-Assyrian texts distinguish between the giving of "tribute" and "booty." Tribute is an annual gifting, and its very act affirms and maintains the existing relationship, typically the acknowledgement of vassalhood with all the rights and responsibilities within such an arrangement. Booty is a one-time gift, after a military decision, that rewards the victor, and establishes the beginning of a relationship. The terminology of the Hebrew Bible does not have separate lexicography between these two redistributive types, but the larger narrative allows such one to distinguish the two concepts.

¹⁷⁷ 1 Kgs 14:25–26; 20:1–6; 2 Kgs 3:4; 12:18–19; 14:13–14; 15:19–20; 16:8–9; 17:3; 18:13–16; 23:33–35.

¹⁷⁸ 1 Kgs 20:3.

regular tributary payments.¹⁷⁹ When the northern kingdom ceases tribute to their overlords, the Assyrian ruler responds by invasion and the eventual capture of Samaria.¹⁸⁰ Southern Judah must give tribute to Aramaeans, Samaria, Assyria and Egypt.¹⁸¹

4.3.a. *The Items of Tribute*

Overwhelmingly, the tribute comes in the form of silver and gold.¹⁸² Rather than extract cumbersome loads of supplies and commodities, the most expeditious tribute item was precious metals. Though it is overly interpretive to translate these terms as “money,” at a minimum, they share some characteristics with cash equivalents within the greater economy.¹⁸³ Such a tributary payment of silver and gold is completely consistent with extant Neo-Assyrian tribute texts. Concerning the tributary policy, Liverani states, “Gold and silver are among the most usual component part of the tribute, almost always in association and quoted as first.”¹⁸⁴ Only these cash-metals have the minimal relative transportation costs compared to bulky in-kind payments.

The tribute items outside of the standard silver and gold involve exceptional cases. When Ben-Hadad of Aram boldly claims, “Your silver and gold are mine,” he is making a claim of political superiority to the Israel state. Therefore, he underscores and supplements this claim with the even more audacious phrase “Your beautiful wives and children are mine.” Whereas the tribute of silver and gold is a standard policy between one superior polity and a lower one, the addition of the wives and children as the tribute violates the integrity of the Israelite family unit. The severity of this claim causes the elders to counsel the king to reverse his earlier decision of capitulation, and eventually leads to YHWH’s deliverance of the Northern Kingdom. Another exceptional item occurs in 2 Kings 3 when the Omrides defeat Mesha, “He (Mesha) returned to the king of Israel 100,000

¹⁷⁹ 2 Kgs 15:17–22.

¹⁸⁰ 2 Kgs 17:3–6.

¹⁸¹ 2 Kgs 12:17–18; 2 Kgs 14:13–14; 2 Kgs 16:8–9; 2 Kgs 23:31–35.

¹⁸² Out of the ten examples of tribute, eight explicitly state the redistribution of silver and gold to the ruling polity: 1 Kgs 14:25–26; 20:1–6; 2 Kgs 12:18–19; 14:13–14; 15:19–20; 16:8–9; 18:13–16; 23:33–35.

¹⁸³ The implications of the DtrH’s use of silver (כסף) as “money” will be explored further in Chapter Five.

¹⁸⁴ John Andrew Dearman, *Property Rights in the Eighth-Century Prophets* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 160.

lambs and 100,000 measures of wool.”¹⁸⁵ Although many of the other tribute amounts appear reasonable in light of Neo-Assyrian tribute lists, the giving of sheep and wool is puzzling. Whereas most of the biblical narratives of tribute use reasonable figures in light of Neo-Assyrian booty lists, the far-fetched amount and the perfectly round number of 100,000 suggest that this figure is indeed a later creation befitting the image of an in-kind tribute from a pastoral Transjordanian state.¹⁸⁶

4.3.b. *The Ideology of Tribute*

The study of the international tribute illuminates the ideological positions of the DtrH on redistribution. Such significant tribute payments are only possible by somehow collecting the funds from the entire nation. By examining the sources of funds for payment, as well as the position of Israel as givers and receivers, one can see the theological neutrality of redistribution. The DtrH neither endorses nor condemns redistribution, but rather uses it as a tool to progress the narrative within a particular ideology.

The majority of these passages state that silver and gold come from *אוצר ביה יהוה* (“the treasuries of the temple of YHWH,”) or the *אוצר בית המלך* (“royal treasuries”) as the primary source.¹⁸⁷ This practice correlates well with Neo-Assyrian tribute inscriptions.¹⁸⁸ The DtrH points out that several sources fill the coffers of this treasury. In Joshua 6:19, 24, the vast spoils of precious metals of conquest go into the temple treasuries without exception.¹⁸⁹ Most significantly, at the culmination of the proto-Solomonic narrative at the end of the temple construction, Solomon’s final act is to collect all of the donations of David, and secure them inside the treasury of the house of YHWH.¹⁹⁰ The nation is unified, the borders and secure, as well as the establishment of a hereditary line that would

¹⁸⁵ 2 Kgs 3:4.

¹⁸⁶ Such a number fits the character of some of fanciful figures of the Chronicler’s tribute (e.g. 1 Chr 29:7).

¹⁸⁷ 1 Kgs 14:26; 2 Kgs 12:17–19; 14:13–14; 16:8–9; 18:13–18.

¹⁸⁸ “From the sack of stormed cities, goods of any type can be gotten, but especially those from the treasure of the royal palace.” Mario Liverani, *Studies on the Annals of Ashurbanipal II 2: Topographical Analysis* (Rome: University of Rome, 1992), 155–156.

¹⁸⁹ The treasury of YHWH appears to grow in stature in the Second Temple. The treasury continues to serve as a depository for war booty. (1 Chr 26:27). General economic goodwill also benefits the treasury through voluntary offerings (1 Chr 29:8) and dedicated donations (Ezra 2:69; 7:69–70 presumably refer to the treasury of YHWH). It may also receive in-kind payments (Neh 13:12).

¹⁹⁰ 1 Kgs 7:51.

last four centuries. As a symbol of strength and blessing from YHWH, the treasury is stockpiled. In other words, the amount within the royal treasury directly correlated to the well-being of the nation.¹⁹¹ Along with the pro-monarchic viewpoint, the introduction of this treasury comes during narratives replete with promises of future blessing, thus implying that such a treasury will be large and bountiful.

During the portrayals of monarchy, however, the redistribution of tribute to foreign lands gives a tangible picture of condemnation. Interestingly, after the initial stockade of the treasury during the building of the temple, all 1 and 2 Kings references to the treasury are withdrawals, symbolic of the many struggles of the nation. Towards the earlier periods of monarchy, YHWH saves both Ahab and Jehoram from tribute by delivering Israel in battle.¹⁹² But because the divided monarchy chooses not to rely on YHWH, the nations lose military battles and are cornered into giving tribute to their enemies, particularly to Assyria.¹⁹³ The place of vassalhood is so entrenched that Hoshea's cessation of tribute leads to the final capture, destruction and deportation of Samaria.¹⁹⁴ The motivation of the cessation of tribute is arrogance and not faith in YHWH, thus as they revolt against the great empire, the inevitable response is the end of the northern kingdom. For Hezekiah, the giving of tribute to the Assyrians is part of the lack of faith. This is highlighted with the specific detail that Hezekiah dismantles the sacred temple in order to make tribute.¹⁹⁵ The text continues to give an ominous message until a moment of repentance and turning to God, which staves off the Assyrians and delivers Jerusalem. In many ways, the volatility of the temple treasury is indicative of the well-being of the nation.

When the treasury is presumably bare, Israel must turn to another drastic measure to pay off an immanent invasion. Two passages specifically describe a redistributive system to pay off foreign powers, thus giving an interesting assessment of tribute. The brief narrative of Menahem ben Gadi centers of his payment of 1,000 talents of silver to the Assyrian

¹⁹¹ Some scholars insist that the primary function of the temple is to serve as the royal fiscal institution. See review by Kozuh, "Temple, Economy and Religion," 929–948. Though such an extreme declaration is an exaggeration, the DtrH assumes a major monetary role of the treasury of the temple of YHWH.

¹⁹² 1 Kgs 20:1–34; 2 Kgs 3:4–27.

¹⁹³ 2 Kgs 15:17–22; 16:8–9.

¹⁹⁴ 2 Kgs 17:3–6.

¹⁹⁵ 2 Kgs 18:13–18.

king for political support.¹⁹⁶ The secondary gloss of the text highlights that Menahem intended this payment to **לְהַחֲזִיק בְּיָדוֹ** (“strengthen the kingdom of his hand”), a phrase missing from the LXX. The addition of a second *lamed*-prepositional phrase also suggests that this phrase belongs to a later redactional phrase.¹⁹⁷ Such a motivation contrasts sharply with any reliance on YHWH, and instead oppressing the peoples to buy peace from a foreign oppressor. Menahem did this through a forced centralization in 2 Kings 15:20a:

וַיֵּצֵא מִנַּחֵם אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל כָּל־גִּבּוֹרֵי הַחֵיל לִתֵּת לַמֶּלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר
חֲמִשִּׁים שֶׁקֶלִים כֶּסֶף לְאִישׁ אֶחָד

Menahem exacted the money from Israel: every man of means had to pay fifty shekels of silver for the king of Assyria.

Extracting (hiphil **יָצָא**) a tax of fifty shekels from each man resulted in an onerous burden for 60,000 men and their households.¹⁹⁸ This impromptu levy receives a particularly harsh judgment in the scope of the greater narratives with the Neo-Assyrian empire. Although in reality, such a move by the king is reasonably prudent in that he gives Israel rest during the tumultuous events of the late eighth century, the unambiguous judgment of DtrH on Menahem is “he did what was evil in the eyes of YHWH.”¹⁹⁹ Another laconic narrative, the reign of Jehoahaz ben Josiah lasts a mere five verses. He makes an assessment (hiphil **עָרַךְ**) on the land in order to collect the fine to Pharaoh Neco.²⁰⁰

אֵךְ הָעָרִיךְ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ לִתֵּת אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף עַל־פִּי פֶּרֶעָה אִישׁ כַּעֲרֻכּוֹ נֹגֵשׁ אֶת־
הַכֶּסֶף וְאֶת־הַזֶּהָב אֶת־עַם הָאָרֶץ לִתֵּת לַפֶּרֶעָה נֹכַח:

¹⁹⁶ Interestingly, the DtrH neglects to mention the tribute from Jehu and Jehoash, attested in Neo-Assyrian sources. See Leroy Waterman, “The Damaged ‘Blueprints’ Of the Temple,” *JNES* 11 (1943): 69–107.

¹⁹⁷ The two consecutive *lamed*-phrases of 2 Kgs 15:19b are redundant: **לְהָיוֹת יָדָיו אֲתוֹ לְהַחֲזִיק בְּיָדוֹ**.

¹⁹⁸ Though the precise value of fifty shekels is difficult to ascertain, first millennium Neo-Babylonian texts suggest that fifty shekels is the rough equivalent of a young slave; Muhammad A. Dandamaev, *Slavery in Babylonia: From Nabopolassar to Alexander the Great (626 to 331 BC)*, trans. Victoria Powell, Marvin Powell, and David B. Weisberg (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1984), 221–222.

¹⁹⁹ 2 Kgs 15:18.

²⁰⁰ 2 Kgs 23:35b. At a silver:gold ratio of 4:1, Neco levies a total fine of 500 talents of silver, roughly half of the fine to Assyria. Curiously, if the tribute items reflect any historical reality, one wonders why Judah would pay Egypt in gold rather than silver.

He then levied from the people of the land the silver and gold to be paid Pharaoh Neco, according to each man's assessment.

The use of the hiphil to extract the payment alludes to Leviticus 27, the so-called addendum to the Holiness Code, the only three other occurrences of the hiphil form of $\sqrt{\text{עָרַד}}$.²⁰¹ In Levitical law, the priest can make assessments to determine a fair amount for the Israelite citizen to have the privilege of participating in the temple donation without creating excessive hardship. Within the Holiness Code, the assessment is a blessing. But within the DtrH, this assessment of Jehoiakim is a punishment in that it moves directly to the foreign Egyptian ruler. And like Menahem, the DtrH judges Jehoiakim negatively with the formula, "he did what was evil in the eyes of YHWH."²⁰²

In sum, redistribution through military tribute and booty is theologically meaningful. Tribute is a blessing to Solomon and the early days of the monarchy, connecting it with material abundance, wisdom and most of all, dedication to the worship of YHWH. Israel is even punished when Ahab refers to turn to redistribution and instead forms a reciprocal partnership with the Aramaeans.²⁰³ But as Israel's story progresses, the DtrH uses tribute as a visceral sign of God's judgment upon the nation. Such a message must have provoked a stirring response during the periods of foreign threat and domination in Iron II.

4.4. *Theoretical Reconsiderations: The Reciprocity of Redistribution*

The beginning of Neo-Assyrian control over the Southern Levant in the eighth century created a paradigmatic shift in the Levantine economic structure. Certainly, all periods of ancient Israel utilized reciprocity as well as redistributive measures as exchange mechanisms. But, the Neo-Assyrian hegemony over the Southern Levant and the concomitant tributary requirements made redistributive exchange a much more visible mode within 1 and 2 Kings. In surveying both the archaeological and biblical evidence for redistribution, one immediately notices that military

²⁰¹ Lev 27:8, 12, 14.

²⁰² 2 Kgs 23:37.

²⁰³ The portrayal of "markets" in Kings 20:34 fit reciprocity more than redistribution or open market exchange. The text carefully outlines the symmetry of the arrangement. Israel can clearly extract more, but is limiting herself to the agreement of the past. Also, the deliberate kinship language reinforces the notion of reciprocity within this text.

considerations play a major concern in the development of redistribution. Thus, as a vassal state, ancient Israel inevitably had to construct a redistributive economy in order to survive within such a harsh political climate. Even with the dissolution of the Neo-Assyrian empire, many of these redistributive elements remain in the societal structure, thus the Neo-Babylonian and Persian periods continue to see a redistributive economy as a dominant exchange mode as kin-based social structures further dissolve.

Although archaeological, epigraphic and biblical evidence all suggest a general movement towards greater redistributive measures in Iron II, the ancient Israelites themselves did not create theoretical divisions between reciprocity and redistribution. In fact, the narratives of redistribution actually show the separation between these two categories as largely artificial. The pro-Solomonic narratives present the inseparability of a reciprocal spirit in the portrayal of redistribution. A unifying theme in these passages is that the redistributive measures function as a symbol and enforcer for the unity of the nation. The provisions passage of 1 Kings 4:7 highlights the participation of all twelve tribes in supplying the royal house and the opening statement that such a process was “over all Israel.” The many donations for the temple construction in 1 Kings 5:27 come from, “all Israel,” which beget an inordinately large amount of items. The narrative of the initial worship service in 1 Kings 8:62–63 uses a chiasmic structure to emphasize “all Israel” and “all sons of Israel” united to frame the description of sacrifice to YHWH. Redistribution is acceptable in that it transfers goods within the ultimate extended kinship of the nation.

This thematic development assures that redistribution need not be a coercive force that extracts from the periphery and channels to the center. Although this is merely a portrayal of redistribution in some of the divided monarchy narratives, redistribution also occurs within a context of communal ideology. The people want to send their goods to Solomon’s palace as part of their identity within the chosen nation. Liverani points out that such an ideology can serve an effective distributive motivation within empire.²⁰⁴ Certainly the proto-Solomonic narratives bring a similar strategy to affirm the legitimacy of redistribution. By sending resources, one is part of a larger kingdom and a positive force in the unification of the nation.

²⁰⁴ Liverani, “The Ideology of the Assyrian Empire,” 171.

The two examples of temple redistribution also help promote a unifying ideology. In the centralization of temple funds to Jehoash, the text explicitly explains the agreement among the priests to give their funds to the threshold. Particular attention goes to the honesty and integrity of the temple finances in that “they did not check the men to whom they gave the funds . . . for they acted honestly.”²⁰⁵ As mentioned, a similar portrayal appears in 2 Kings 22:3–7, though this time with a much more successful result. Although the very presence of this statement in both passages implies the real problem of dishonest accounting, the explicit message points to an ideological unity of the people in their redistribution. They did so out of social forces, to be included within the nation, much like the catalyst for reciprocity.

Similarly, the international redistributive narrative also uses both language and principles of reciprocity. When Menahem invokes the support of the Assyrians, the text suggests that the payment functions to “that his hand be on him, and he strengthen the kingdom of his hand.”²⁰⁶ Preceding Ahaz’s “bribe” to the Assyrian empire, he uses kinship language to highlight the relationship with the great power, “I am your servant and your son.”²⁰⁷ In both these examples, we are not dealing with reciprocal exchange, as the transaction is clearly one-sided movement to the center, with limited distribution. Also, unlike reciprocal exchange in Amarna, the greater polity appears to hold virtually absolute power. Yet participation within this network creates a certain association based on a real or fictive kinship relationship. By giving to the Assyrian empire, the nation can now receive protections. But the DtrH contends that such tribute cannot compare to the guarantees of YHWH.

These observations raise issues of theoretical underpinnings behind the methodology of ancient economic history. Whereas many of the theories described in Chapter Two tend to argue for a single dominant economic theory to best understand the economic structures of antiquity, the shift in economic structures in ancient Israel suggests that different theories can best explain different eras in history. In addition, the language of redistribution and the concomitant ideology suggest the difficulty in isolating the mechanics of redistribution as a prime model for explanatory power. Accordingly, the legitimacy of the Polanyi’s threefold division of

²⁰⁵ 2 Kgs 12:16.

²⁰⁶ 2 Kgs 15:19.

²⁰⁷ 2 Kgs 16:7.

economic mechanisms stands in doubt. The narratives of 1 and 2 Kings give ample portrayal of both economic structures, matching the limited epigraphic and archaeological picture. As we lead into the controversial subject of Polanyi's third category of market exchange, we can anticipate that the examination of biblical texts will certainly not solve the substantivist-formalist debate. But, this examination will hopefully help ask better questions on the nature of Israelite economies.

4.5. *Summary and Conclusions*

1 and 2 Kings portrays a centralized redistributive economy both through the directives of Solomon and the temple economy. Despite the obvious ideological reworkings of the text, the biblical text displays some level of congruence to the archaeological evidence during the Iron Age II. The material remains of settlement, architecture, imports and epigraphy all point to a progression towards greater and greater specialization throughout this period.

The biblical portrayals of this redistribution are ideologically significant according to the narrative intent. In line with ancient historiography, the report of grand redistributive measures attempts to validate the political legitimacy of the Davidic rule. The DtrH tries to positively correlate redistributive efforts to divine blessing and capable rule. At the same time, redistribution necessitates an asymmetrical power balance. At times, this redistribution oppresses the people, and the royally-sponsored scribes needed to attempt to deal with these injustices. At other times such as exile, the text underlines these abusive activities to account for the failures of the Davidic dynasty.

After looking at both of the socially-embedded exchange mechanisms of reciprocity and redistribution, it is clear that the two exchange methods have significant overlap. The metaphor of patrimonialism often motivates and justifies asymmetrical redistribution. With the king as the grand patriarch of the polity, he can now appeal to social forces to require the subjects to send their values to the center. The existence of both reciprocity and redistribution is indisputable from looking at the biblical portrayals. The pervasiveness of the two measures depends largely on the existence of market forces in ancient Israel.

CHAPTER FIVE

MARKET EXCHANGE IN THE BOOK OF KINGS

5.1. *Did Ancient Israel Know Price-Determining Markets?* *The State of the Question*

As Adam Smith formulated his theories on general economy, he assumed that his principles would apply to all societies of all periods. Much like the properties of physics, economists during the Enlightenment envisioned universal laws, verifiable by social observations. As explained in Chapter Two, anthropological studies on pre-capitalist economies established that such exchange activity is not reducible to simple mechanical formulae or two-variable graphs. Accordingly, the preceding analyses on portrayals of reciprocity and redistribution in Kings confirms the rejection of the extreme formalist view of ancient Israel, most explicitly defended by Morris Silver and implicitly presupposed in many treatments of Israelite history.¹ Biblical texts presume that social forces and coercion often had a greater effect in economic decision-making independent of supply-and-demand.

But the rejection of extreme economic formalism does not automatically support the conflicting substantivism of Polanyi. Up to now, this study has determined that the polarity between these two viewpoints is largely artificial. The main question for this chapter is to discern the level of importance attributable to supply-and-demand as a regulative factor in economic decision-making. Did the ancient Israelite replicate classical political economy's *homo economicus* in seeking to satisfy unlimited wants through maximizing behavior? Did self-regulating markets help to make distributive decisions on the local and international scale? In tangible terms, did Omri survey the Samarian Hills, and make an offer on Shemer's estate based on the derived financial benefit, or did he buy the land out of duty as the kinsman redeemer for a predetermined price?

Unfortunately, Iron II Levantine material culture is extremely inadequate for this question. By technological advances, anthropologists can

¹ Silver, *Economic Structures of the Ancient Near East*; Silver, *Prophets and Markets*.

trace the origins of pottery, analyze the residue within the containers and determine that wheat from the Judaeian Hills and northern Negev in a Phoenician style vessel with local clay traveled to Ashkelon in the seventh century.² But despite this technical sophistication, archaeological study cannot definitively reveal the nature of this exchange, specifically whether the wheat arrived via reciprocity, redistribution or market trade. More recent post-processual approaches do not fair much better in terms of interpreting the complexity of ancient trade.³ Epigraphic texts can provide more concrete evidence, but the extant record under the biblical periods is too scarce, particularly in comparison to the vast archives of third millennium Sumer or Ptolemaic Egypt.⁴ Near Eastern ethno-archaeological comparisons can help stimulate new questions and vantage points, but such material requires judicious usage, as these social contexts occur multiple millennia past the Iron Age. Essentially, all of these disciplines are helpful to discern the question of markets, but all of them carry significant limitations as well.

Under these conditions, the analysis of literary texts can help to provide an additional vantage point on the difficult question of market exchange in ancient Israel. This chapter exegetes several key passages in 1 and 2 Kings that seemingly presume at least some existence of market exchange. Analysis of each passage will pay particular attention to the presence of self-regulating markets of antiquity with the hope of contributing to the wider discussion on Israel and ancient Near Eastern economies.

5.2. *Possible References to Market Exchange*

5.2.a. *1 Kings 9:26–28; 10:11–12, 22, 28–29: Solomon's Long-Distance Trade*

Morris Silver draws heavily on the joint venture activities between Solomon and Hiram in 1 Kings 5, 9–10 to assert a formalist market economy in antiquity.⁵ Through Phoenician expertise, Solomon establishes faraway harbors, and obtains enormous amounts of gold and valuable metals.

² Ehud Weiss and Mordechai Kislev, "Plant Remains as Indicators for Economic Activity: A Case Study from Iron Age Ashkelon," *Journal of Archaeological Science* 31 (2003): 1–13.

³ McC. Adams, "Anthropological Perspectives on Ancient Trade," 239–258; Ian Hodder and E. Orton, *Spatial Analysis in Archaeology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976).

⁴ Even with the enormous economic archives from these periods, scholars still debate over the nature of economy of these periods.

⁵ The usage of the term "joint-venture" makes an enormous presumption on a capitalist economic structure. See Silver, *Prophets and Markets*, 57–60.

Solomon also procures precious things such as almug wood for elaborate decorations and musical instruments.⁶ In addition, the voyages brought elephants, monkeys and peacocks. To a degree, the portrayal of Solomon's long-distance trade incorporates elements of open market trade. Many commentators and histories agree with Silver, categorizing these exchanges as analogous to supply-and-demand exchange.⁷ A closer look at the passage gives a more mixed analysis to the nature of Solomon's long-distance trade.

In accessing the nature of Solomonic trade, it is important to understand the issues of historical reconstruction. Whereas the material culture gives strong evidence for redistribution, the evidence for participation in a vast tenth century trade network is more ambiguous. The material culture for Israel and Judah show much greater evidence for large-scale international trade, during the periods after Iron Age IIA.⁸ Many of the biblical portrayals of Solomonic trade have a legendary, folk quality, such as the descriptions of exotic cargo from faraway places. Other claims of trade make absolutely no sense in terms of either formalist or substantivist economics. For example, according to 1 Kings 10:28–29, Solomon profitably acquires horses from Egypt and delivers them to the Hittites and Aramaeans. Several scholars believed that this text used a Solomonic administrative document as a source.⁹ But such an exchange is doubtful in light of access to supply to horses in Anatolia negating any marginal efficiency. Donald Schley suggests that the textual difficulties with 1 Kings 10:28 indicate a poetic origin rather than an administrative document.¹⁰ Ancient Near Eastern evidence associates horses with royal prestige both in textual references and in material culture.¹¹ In addition,

⁶ "And almug wood has never come like this nor has it been seen till this day," 1 Kgs 10:12.

⁷ Gray, *I & II Kings*, 262–270; Fritz, *1 and 2 Kings* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 123–127.

⁸ Barkay, "The Iron Age II–III," 302–373.

⁹ Yutaka Ikeda, "Solomon's Trade in Horses and Chariots in Its International Setting," in *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon*, 216–217.

¹⁰ Donald Schley Jr., "1 Kings 10:26–29: A Reconsideration," *JBL* 106 (1987): 595–601. In particular, the Masoretic usage of the disjunctive *atnah* makes a clause begin with a *waw*, attached preposition, then a place name in וּמְקוֹרָה, then repeats this phrase later within the clause. Schley proposes that the parallel in 1 Chr 1:16b maintains the nature of the poetic original: מְקוֹא סַתְרֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ // מְקוֹא יִקְחוּ בַמַּחִיר.

¹¹ Deborah Cantrell cites sizeable evidence in assessing the prestige of horses. Sargon II treasured his imported horses, claiming, "Twelve large horses of Egypt, the like of which did not exist in . . . country." A royal cemetery in El Kurru of Nubia has a horse cemetery with horses buried upright with full dress and jewelry. See Deborah O'Daniel Cantrell, "The Horsemen of Israel," 57–60.

the overall context of 1 Kings 10:23–29 displays a eulogistic tone in using the horse monopoly to promulgate an ideology of blessing to Solomon. Thus, the assessment of historicity of these narratives must be cautious and judicious.

At the same time, with a system of redistribution already in place, and access to major thoroughfares and coastal ports, one would expect a modest degree of international trade. Specifically, a historical Solomon could control two major land routes that connected major nations with a previous trading history. Holladay suggests that the tolls over the Arabian spice trade contributed as a major source of cash to the empire.¹² Such overland control can fit the social context of two passages: (1) Edom's hostility to Solomon by interrupting his control of the Arabian trade in 1 Kings 10:14–15; and (2) 1 Kings 11:14–22's claim of massive amounts of gold from the "traders of Arabia." The abundance of Phoenician material culture in the Iron IIA further corroborates some participation in an international trade. Phoenician wares appear in many tenth and ninth century contexts.¹³ Also, the city constructions at the major centers of Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer display Phoenician influence. The portrayal of Byblos in the *Tale of Wen Amun* presumes that Phoenician presence was indeed strong on the Levantine coast at this time, particularly with the decline of Egypt during the Third Intermediate Period.¹⁴ Although the literary and archaeological evidence for a large long-distance trade network is somewhat limited, such a network in partnership with Phoenicia is quite plausible in consideration of topography and the overall scene in the Southern Levant.

The DtrH description of this trade of 1 Kings 9–10 has traits of both free market and administered trade. In recognizing the components of supply-and-demand, the lexicography suggests socially disembedded exchange more than administrative trade.¹⁵ The word סָחַר ("to trade") in 1 Kings 9 derives from a semitic root, originally intended as "to travel." But the

¹² Holladay, "Hezekiah's Tribute," 309–331.

¹³ Patricia M. Bikai, *The Pottery of Tyre* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1978); Hillel Geva, "Archaeological Evidence for the Trade between Israel and Tyre," *BASOR* 248 (1982): 69–72; Holladay, "The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah," 368–398.

¹⁴ The testimony of *The Tale of Wen Amun* is particularly relevant if one accepts Bernd Schipper's tenth century date; Schipper, *Die Erzählung des Wenamun: Ein Literaturwerk im Spannungsfeld von Politik, Geschichte und Religion* (OBO 209, Freiberg: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005).

¹⁵ Market trade occurs when supply-and-demand regulate the price. Polanyi used the concept of 'administered trade' to circumvent the compelling formalist evidence of the Old Assyrian trade texts, suggesting that such trade was more of a reciprocal arrangement between distant polities.

usage of this term within Standard Biblical Hebrew, shows that its semantic range can include market settings and fluctuating prices. In Genesis 37:28, a Midianite caravan of סֹחֲרִים (“traders”) purchases Joseph for twenty shekels of silver.¹⁶

ויעברו אנשים מדינים סחרים וימשכו ויעלו את־יוסף מן־הבור וימכרו
את־יוסף לישמעאלים בעשרים כסף ויביאו את־יוסף מצרימה:

When Midianite traders passed by, they pulled Joseph up out of the pit. They sold Joseph for twenty shekels of silver to the Ishmaelites, who brought Joseph to Egypt.

Despite arising from the same ancestral bloodline, the Hebrew Bible explicitly outlines the hostility and social distance between Israel and Midianites.¹⁷ Within the middle of the steppe, with very little probability of future meeting, social forces cannot account for the exchange to the caravan. Thus, any exchange between them is hardly socially-embedded! The brothers have an excess human (= slave) and the Midianites could then increase their inventory of this commodity, which they later sell (מכר) to Potiphar in Egypt.¹⁸ The only plausible categorization of such סחר exchange is a match of supply-and-demand. Isaiah 23 provides another clear reference to market exchange through the root סחר to describe Tyre’s commercial ventures.¹⁹

דמו יִשְׁבִי אֵי סַחַר צִידוֹן עֵבֶר יָם מִלְאֹךְ: וּבָמִים רַבִּים זֶרַע שַׁחַר קִצִּיר
יֵאֹר תְּבוּאָתָהּ וְתֵהִי סַחַר גּוֹיִם:

Moan, you coastland dwellers, you traders of Sidon, once filled with seafarers. Over many waters, your gain was from the trade of nations, from the grain of Shihor, the harvest of the Nile;

¹⁶ Kenneth Kitchen surveys the slave prices in the cuneiform and concludes that the price of twenty shekels suggests an authenticity to the transaction. He argues that prices gradually move from the Old Babylonian (15–30 shekels) to the Late Bronze Age (30+ shekels), Neo-Assyrian (50–60 shekels) and Persian (90–120 shekels) periods; Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003). But in fact, cuneiform records display an enormous variability in slave prices that preclude any dating of texts according to a single price. In particular, see Dandamaev, *Slavery in Babylonia*, 221–222. Also, one must consider the exchange context, the brothers only hoped to rid of Joseph more than make a profit. The Midianites did not seek to accumulate “inventory” in the middle of the steppe. Both these factors would suggest that the price of twenty shekels was considerably less than the market value.

¹⁷ Num 10:29; 31; Jdgs 6–8.

¹⁸ Gen 37:36.

¹⁹ Isa 23:2, 3, 8, 18.

The polemic of the oracle makes little sense in light of administered trade under Assyrian hegemony. Isaiah accuses Tyre of greed, hoarding or complacency on the basis of their lucrative ventures. The final condemnation especially characterizes the trade of the Phoenicians:

והיה סתרה ואתננה קדש ליהוה לא יאצר ולא יחסן כי לישבים לפני
יהוה יהיה סחרה לאכל לשבעה ולמכסה עתיק;

But her trading and wages will be consecrated to YHWH. They will not be treasured, nor stored, rather her gain will go to those who abide in YHWH, that they may eat their fill and clothes themselves in abundance.²⁰

The prophetic oracle holds the Phoenicians accountable for their own market ventures. It assumes Phoenician hoarding and oversupply, contrary to the tenets of the substantivist *homo reciprocans*.

Other terms also suggest an influence of market exchange. In 1 Kings 10:15, the passages makes reference to אנשי התרים (“men of trading”) a term that the LXX views as synonymous with סחר in that both translate into the Greek ἔμπορος (“to be in business”). The parallel term in the following line refers to “merchants” (רכלים), a lexical item almost exclusively found in more free-market oriented post-exilic literature, particularly in the Ezekiel 27 oracle against Tyre’s commercial enterprises.²¹

This trade lexicography matches a discernable overall Semitic movement towards market-oriented terminology in the Iron Age. Liverani detects that many Bronze Age Semitic roots fit socially-embedded economic societies, then these same terms shift in meaning to reflect stronger market presence.²² For example, the Bronze Age binomial root *motar/mahsor* means “excess/deficit,” but during the first millennium, this same term now means “profit/loss.” The Late Bronze Age semitic word *kly* means “consume,” but in the Iron Age also takes on the definition

²⁰ Isa 23:18.

²¹ Ezek 27:3, 13, 15, 17, 20, 22, 23, 24. A study of the developing market conditions of the post-exilic period go beyond the scope of this study, but it is certainly plausible based on economic documents in Mesopotamia (Murashu, Egibi archives) combined with shifting socio-economic assumptions in post-exilic literature. Kathleen Abraham, *Business and Politics under the Persian Empire: The Financial Dealings of Marduk-Nasir-Apil of the House of Egibi (521–487 BCE)* (Bethesda: CDL Press, 2004); Seow, “The Socioeconomic Context Of ‘The Preacher’s’ Hermeneutic,” 168–195; Slotzky, *The Bourse of Babylon*; Matthew W. Stolper, *Entrepreneurs and Empire: The Murashu Archive, the Murashu Firm, and Persian Rule in Babylonia* (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1985); Temin, *Price Behaviour*.

²² Mario Liverani, “Political Lexicon and Political Ideologies in the Amarna Letters,” *Berytus* 31 (1983): 41–56.

of “to spend.” The term *mhr* “equivalence” later functions as “price” and *mkr* “exchange” later means “sell.” The market terminology above of *rkl* and *shr* did not appear in the entire Ugaritic corpus, striking considering that Ugarit was the port city *par excellence* during the flourishing Late Bronze Age.

Furthermore, the brief passage of 1 Kings 10:28–29 deliberately portrays Solomon as a market-driven profiteer. He buys horses and chariots from Musri and Kue respectively located in the plains of Cilicia and the Taurus mountains.²³ Although the likelihood of Solomon engaging in such horse trade is remote, this passage may possibly rely on a pre-exilic source on several accounts.²⁴ A ninth century royal inscription of Shalmaneser III also lists these two geographical locations in succession as horse breeding grounds.²⁵ A later redactor emended מִצְרִי to מִצְרַיִם, and this version must have served as a source for the Deuteronomy 17:16 warning against collecting horses, thus the source must predate the early stages of the DtrH.²⁶ The production of chariots in Egypt was prominent since New Kingdom times. Even the prices appear as reasonable within the limited comparative evidence, though they may also reflect Solomonic hyperbole.²⁷ Unlike the treaty with Hiram, the passage shows no interest in political partnership between these lands, but rather the narrative portrays a socially-disembedded transaction based on supply-and-demand.

Most importantly, the involvement with Phoenicia necessitates participation in a larger market-driven trade network.²⁸ After the collapse of the Late Bronze Age, the expansion of the Phoenicians to the west is only plausible with a certain supply-and-demand factor. Susan Sherratt and Andrew Sherratt argue that the destruction of the palatial Late Bronze Age

²³ Fritz, *1 and 2 Kings*, 127.

²⁴ Donald Schley observes that both the textual difficulties and overall eulogistic style of the passage betray the ahistorical nature. Schley Jr., “1 Kings 10:26–29: A Reconsideration,” 595–601.

²⁵ *ANET* 279.

²⁶ The same emendation of מִצְרִי to mitraim occurs in 2 Kgs 7:6, a context which distinctly refers to the Hittite empire; Gray, *I & II Kings*, 269.

²⁷ A Mari letter, *ARM* 5.20, 36ff, mentions the purchase of two horses from Qatna for 300 shekels each. In Ugarit, administrative text *PRU* III, p.41 lists 200 shekels for a horse, though this must be weighed against the sale of a horse for thirty shekels in Nuzi; *EA* 22:3 assess the “golden chariot” of Tushratti of Mitannni at 320 shekels of gold. For more pricing, see Cantrell, “The Horsemen of Israel,” 61–64.

²⁸ Substantivists claim that Tyre served as a classic Polanyian port of trade, thus indicating the presence of administered trade. But this theory has several glaring holes. Tyre was not a completely neutral city, but in partnership with the Assyrian empire. Also, no evidence exists that suggests that prices were fixed.

economies allowed for merchant-based trade to saturate the Levantine exchange network.²⁹ In fact, material culture supports the least destruction and the quickest emergence into the long-distance trade scene on the Phoenician littoral as early as the eleventh century.³⁰ Reciprocity is unlikely because of the sheer distance negated the prospect of a significant social relationship to warrant symmetrical exchange for social standing for these city-states. The Tyrian household likely did not care about their status to those thousands of miles away in Gadir. Redistribution is equally unlikely as neither the Phoenicians nor Assyrians could have established a military presence in such distant lands to coerce significant movement of goods. Only socially-disembedded market exchange could account for this long-distance trade.³¹ To support this interpretation, the limited textual evidence suggests a significant supply-and-demand presence. For example, a letter from a governor to Tiglath Pileser III from 738–734 BCE talks explicitly of commercial transactions within Phoenician cities.³² The letter does give some restriction to trade activity, as they command the Sidonians to not sell timber to the Israelites, nor Egyptians. But in general, free trade appears accepted and operational.

Despite these indications, the portrayal of Solomonic long-distance trade does not completely match Silver's classification of purely formalist market. First, the forces of supply-and-demand do not factor significantly in the partnership between Hiram and Solomon. The dialogue is replete with kinship language, and symbolizes the beginning of lasting political relationships more than a commercial contract. The negotiations

²⁹ Susan Sherratt, "The Mediterranean Economy: 'Globalization' At the End of the Second Millennium BCE," in *Symbiosis, Symbolism, and the Power of the Past: Canaan, Ancient Israel, and Their Neighbors from the Late Bronze Age through Roman Palestine*, ed. William G. Dever and Sy Gitin (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 37–62; Sherratt, "'Sea Peoples' And the Economic Structure of the Late Second Millenium in the Eastern Mediterranean," in *Mediterranean Peoples in Transition, Thirteenth to Early Tenth Centuries BCE*, eds. Sy Gitin, Amihai Mazar and Ephraim Stern (Jerusalem: 1998), 292–313; Susan Sherratt and Andrew Sherratt, "The Growth of the Mediterranean Economy in the Early First Millennium BC," *World Archaeology* 24 (1993): 361–378.

³⁰ Ayelet Gilboa emphasizes the continuity of material culture from the Late Bronze Age to Iron Age I, north of the Yarkon River; Gilboa, "Sea Peoples and Phoenicians Along the Southern Phoenician Coast—a Reconciliation: An Interpretation of Sikila (skl) Material Culture," *BASOR* 337 (2005): 47–78; Christine Thompson determines a strong Phoenician trading presence on the evidence of the Cisjordan silver hoards from Sardina; Thompson, "Silver in the Age of Iron."

³¹ The scholarship of the substantivist position within ancient Near Eastern economies tends to have a single vulnerable point in all periods: the prevalence of long distance trade.

³² Hayim Tadmor, *The Inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III King of Assyria* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1994); ND2715.

do not represent two people looking to economically maximize, but rather phrases that point to non-rational demand curves. Solomon promises, "I will pay you the wages of your servants according to whatever you say, for you know that there is no one among us who knows how to cut trees like the Sidonians."³³ The high praise for the Sidonian wood-cutting abilities is not only reflective of consumer desire, but it functions within the greater context as an acknowledgement of Tyre's wide political control, as well as their elite artisan abilities. In response, Hiram states, "I will do all that you desire."³⁴ This dialogue is nothing like a hard-line market negotiation.

Second, despite the market-oriented terminology, the literary context suggests that the long-distance Solomonic trade functions more as tribute or administered trade. Within the long-distance Phoenician voyages, the DtrH inserted the Queen of Sheba account, which ended with the world giving vast amounts of tribute to Solomon in accord with his superior wisdom. The tribute items are all luxury, high-prestige goods, somewhat reminiscent of the hyperbole of Neo-Assyrian tribute lists. Gold and silver is not used for cash nor savings, but for elaborate decoration. Horses and chariots appear as socially significant prestige goods in Egyptian and Mesopotamian texts.³⁵ Almug wood and ivories are not the most functional materials, but serve as a means of status. Precious stones had pure scarcity value, but they did not physically help to meet the demands of the kingdom. The costs of transporting exotic animals such as peacocks, monkeys and elephants far outweigh any commercial significance. The cargo lacks substantive commodities such as textiles, foodstuffs or raw materials. The narrative implies that the collection of these goods does not intend to maximize Solomon's wealth. Rather, these are all prestige goods, designed to bring status and legitimacy to the relatively new monarchy.

Third, the narrative leaves out important components of market exchange. The passage never mentions any hint of negotiation over prices, a hallmark of Polanyian self-regulating markets.³⁶ In settling on a "market"

³³ 1 Kgs 5:20.

³⁴ 1 Kgs 5:22.

³⁵ For example, Thutmose III seizes 924 chariots and 2,238 horses in the battle of Megiddo and his son Amenhotep II delivered 820 horses and 730 chariots as war spoil from Canaan. In the Akkadian text, "The Poor Man of Nippur," the chariot is "the mark of noblemen," and a possession that "befits his royalty;" O.R. Gurney, "The Tale of the Poor Man of Nippur," *AnSt* 6 (1956): 145–162, with corrections, *AnSt* 7 (1957): 135–136; Ikeda, "Solomon's Trade in Horses and Chariots," 217, 221.

³⁶ "Higgling-haggling has been rightly recognized as being of the essence of bargaining behavior. In order for exchange to be integrative the behavior of the partners must be oriented on producing a price that is as favorable to each partner as he can make it." Polanyi, "The Economy as Instituted Process," 255.

price (rather than an artificially-determined “administered” price), both the buyer and supplier must have access to information to meet in a natural equilibrium. Negotiation serves the essential process of reaching such a point. Furthermore, the passages neglect to mention any of the materials that Israel exported to obtain all of these exquisite goods. In reality, Phoenician ships were never empty. Any actual joint ventures likely had the Israel nation provide foodstuffs, particularly wheat and wine, in exchange for the Phoenician seafaring technology, resources and infrastructure. But by deliberating neglecting the export, the DtrH creates a portrait of a nation simply receiving exotic goods from all over the world.

Fourth, the text clearly depicts the royal heads of state initiating and administering this trade, and not individual entrepreneurs. Free markets did not exist in the capitalist sense, but had to be opened through government initiative, often through force.³⁷ Once creating international exchange, the components of overseas trade did not always trickle down to the individual household. The goods that Solomon procured were intended for elite consumption, though on the production side, the requirement of goods extracted reached the individual level. As in the Old Assyrian empire and Late Bronze Age Levant, the supply-and-demand component of such long-distance trade may have had immaterial impact on the actual greater economic structure, which was dominated by other exchange mechanisms.

This mixed picture of the long-distance trade of Solomon at least partially reflects the tension between the DtrH ideology and the historical reality. The biblical context of the Solomonic narratives show a powerful United Monarchy that did not require trade but had such surpassing wisdom that the wealth of nations arrived in abundance. Just as Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions do not mention negotiations, the DtrH attempts to portray the Solomonic empire as a glorious polity in strength and wealth. Therefore, whereas the portrayal of long-distance exchange reads much more like redistributive tribute, such a description most likely arises primarily from the ideological polemic of the DtrH. For the pre-exilic redaction, the material grandeur of Solomon contributed to the legitimacy of his chosen heirs, whether Hezekiah or Josiah. But for the exilic redactor, this accumulation later served as the basis for divine punishment, as such

³⁷ In two instances, Sargon II boasts of opening up trade relations with Egypt. See the Annals of Sargon II (COS 2.118A) and the Nimrud Prism D (COS 2.118D). The use of causative implies that Sargon not only created market access over vast distances, but he also catalyzed the actual trade relations.

detailed information serves as the backdrop to the downfall of Solomon's United Monarchy.³⁸ Although the textual evidence is quite limited, it appears that the portrayals of Solomon's long-distance trade is superficially tributary exchange with market-oriented elements in the subtext as well as any historical kernel.³⁹ Certainly the passages suggest that ancient Israel knew markets, though in a limited capacity.

5.2.b. *1 Kings 20:34: Israelite Merchants in Damascus*

As a result of Ahab's victory over Ben-Hadad in both Samaria and Aphek, *1 Kings 20:34* reports that the Israelites gain the right to set up חוצות ("markets") in Damascus:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר-לָקַח-אֲבִי מֵאֵת אֲבִיךָ אֲשִׁיב וְחֻצוֹת תִּשִּׂים לָךְ
בְּדַמְשֶׁק כְּאֲשֶׁר-שָׂם אֲבִי בְּשֶׁמְרוֹן וְאֲנִי בְּכַרִּית אֲשַׁלַּחךָ וַיִּכְרַת-לּוֹ בְּרִית
וַיִּשְׁלַחֵהוּ:

Ben-Hadad said to him, "I will give back the towns that my father took from your father, and you may set up markets for yourself in Damascus as my father did in Samaria." "And I, for my part," said Ahab, "will let you go home under these terms." So he made a treaty with him and dismissed him.

The implications on economic structure depend on interpreting the term חוץ. Most commentators suggest that the term refers to trading rights within this strategic North-South Transjordanian road.⁴⁰ Considering the economic movement in and out of Damascus, commercial access to this location equated to an enormous political victory in addition to immense economic opportunity for Israel.

This secondary usage of חוץ as "market / trading area" is somewhat rare. Aside from the present example, the clearest reference to חוץ as a

³⁸ The divine punishment of God is especially explicit in *1 Kgs 22:49*, when Jehoshaphat, a righteous king attempts to renew Ophir long-distance trade but fails due to the sinking ships. Whereas *1 Kgs* presents the failer voyages as a natural calamity, the *Chronicles'* version of this text attributes this failure as direct punishment from God. Michael Fishbane interprets this as an aggadic exegetical note in *Chronicles*; see Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, 403.

³⁹ Although this dissonance between the portrayal of text and the actual reality in some respects goes against some of the methodological assumptions of the text, in that this passage displays a clearly ideological clouding of the historical narrative. In many of the other passages, such ideological intent is undetectable, thus allowing for the greater possibility that the portrayal of exchange has a better likelihood of reflecting actual practice.

⁴⁰ Brueggemann, *I and II Kings*, 253–255; Gray, *1 and 2 Kings*, 430; Provan, *1 and 2 Kings*, 153; Sweeney, *1 and 2 Kings*, 243–244. Fritz argues for Ahab using this space to parade military victory; see Fritz, *1 and 2 Kings*, 207.

“trading zone” appears in Jeremiah 37:21. King Zedekiah authorizes the distribution of a loaf of bread per day to Jeremiah from the חוץ האפים (“bread market”) until the supply depletes. Other possible references to this secondary meaning of חוץ appear in 2 Kings 4:3, Zephaniah 3:6, Isaiah 10:6, Lamentations 2:19; 4:1 and Ezekiel 26:11.⁴¹ Though most modern versions typically translate this term as “streets” or “outside,” the context of these select passages suggests that a translation of “open market” may be equally tenable. More specifically, these “markets” store regular inventories and their disarray suggests a poor state of the economy.

Scholars often correlate the social function of Ahab’s Damascus חוצות to the Akkadian *karum*.⁴² The Old Assyrian caravan texts provide the primary description of a *karum*, though its presence in the ancient Near East continued into the Neo-Babylonian period. The Akkadian term originally meant an embankment or mooring, eventually meaning a harbor, then a trading district within a city.⁴³ Parallel to Jeremiah’s use of חוץ, the Assyrian *karum* also served as a storage center.⁴⁴ The *karum* had authority over economic exchange in that they settled commercial disputes and set punitive fines.⁴⁵ Most importantly, the *karum* controlled the customs and tolls on merchandise on the way to other destinations in the form of *saddu’utu*-tax.⁴⁶ The Israelite placement of a *karum* in Damascus fits perfectly within the context of 1 Kings 20. The Aramaeans just suffered a humiliating defeat and acknowledged the superiority of Israel and YHWH. The establishment of an Israelite *karum* effectively gives commercial authority to Israel. At the same time, the geographical position of Damascus as a strategic hub guarantees financial gain from tolls and customs.

The identification of the Ahab’s “markets” as analogous to *karum* favors the real presence of supply-and-demand. During the development of Polanyi’s economic substantivism of the ancient Near East, the function of

⁴¹ In particular, the phrase “like mortar in the street” (בַּחֲמֹר חוּצָה) makes little sense in Isa 10:6. The translation of “like the homer-measurement in the market” may better fit the context of financial condemnation.

⁴² Moshe Elat, *Economic Relations in the Land of the Bible*; Cogan, 1 Kings, 207–208; The Akkadian term for “streets” also has likely meaning of marketplace in Sargonic texts, Benjamin R. Foster, “Commercial Activity in Sargonic Mesopotamia,” *Iraq* 39 (1977), 40.

⁴³ *CAD K*, 231.

⁴⁴ Two examples of *karum* as storage: “If they are ready to place in storage at the *karum*-office bought they returned eleven of them to me in the *karum*-office”; and “Two *sulhu* garments I deposited to your account at the *karum* office,” *CAD K*, 231.

⁴⁵ “Bring my case to the full assembly of the trading station;” “They agreed to take us to the trading station and we brought an end to their dispute”; *CAD K*, 231.

⁴⁶ “Pay three shekels per mina, the *saddu’utu* tax of the *kanis* trading station”; *CAD K*, 231.

the Assyrian *karum* proved to be the most problematic issue with the substantivist idea of marketless trading. Polanyi took great pains to account for the presence of a seemingly capitalist Old Assyrian archives in a substantivist society. He developed the theoretical concept of administered trade in which prices move in artificial directions according to centralized palace directives.⁴⁷ During the 1970s attack on Polanyian theories among Assyriologists, these very descriptions of *karum* served as the easiest assault on substantivism.⁴⁸ Within these *karum*, the Old Assyrian archives display several market elements: price-setting, profit, hoarding. At the conclusion of a lengthy monograph on the Old Assyrian trade texts, Klaus Veenhof determines, "We further have to conclude that markets did exist in Anatolia, where trade in the goods imported by the Assyrians and in silver, gold, copper and wool was practiced, but due to circumstances outlined above we cannot adequately assess the importance of the markets, compared with other possible forms of trade."⁴⁹ Although the inhabitants of Ahab's markets were likely royally appointed, they operated under some degree of supply-and-demand.

But in light of Veenhof's judicious caution, one must realize that a single occurrence does not make ancient Israel into a supply-and-demand market. In fact, the uniqueness of the חוץ as a trading center in the Bible may hint on the lack of market presence in pre-exilic Israel. The term חוץ troubled the early translators, as the LXX render this term as ἐξόδους for a difficult reading.⁵⁰ Looking further into the context of this lone example suggests more of a mixed economy. Ahab receives the concessions of establishing "markets" as part of a general treaty between Israel and Aram-Damascus. By appealing to the profits and windfall from control of Damascus, Ahab must build and maintain a relationship with an enemy. The prophetic condemnation of the following verses 35–43 show that the DtrH opposed this generosity to Israel's foe. Although unspoken, the proper response was complete annihilation in line with the ban laws.

⁴⁷ Polanyi, "Marketless Trading in Hammurabi's Time."

⁴⁸ See Veenhof, *Aspects of the Old Assyrian Trade*; also cf. Foster, "Commercial Activity in Sargonic Mesopotamia," 31–44; John Gledhill and Morgens Larsen, "The Polanyi Paradigm and a Dynamic Analysis of Archaic States," in *Theory and Explanation in Archaeology: The Southampton Conference*, eds. Colin Renfrew, M.J. Rowlands and Barbara A. Segraves (New York: Academic Press, 1982): 197–229; Marvin Powell, "Sumerian Merchants and the Problem of Profit," *Iraq* 39 (1977): 23–29.

⁴⁹ Veenhof, *Aspects of the Old Assyrian Trade*, 399–400.

⁵⁰ Targum Jonathan has a much better correlating word with dual meaning, translating the Hebrew חוץ with the Aramaic term שוק, which can mean both streets and market.

Instead of annihilating the enemy power of Aram-Damascus, Ahab greedily sees the opportunity for financial gain, and makes a covenant with Ahab, effectively violating the covenant with YHWH. So even in this lone example, the opening of a market is entwined within the development of a reciprocal relationship between Ahab and Ben-Hadad.

5.2.c. *2 Kings 6:24–25; 7:1–18: Price Movements in Besieged Samaria*

Because Ahab did not kill Ben-Hadad, the foreign king grows in strength, musters an army and sieges Samaria. Ahab hopes to reap the lucrative benefits of market exchange, but eventually the prices that arise from these market forces symbolize a disastrous scarcity within the city.

2 Kings 6:24–25 reports on the scarcity through the movement of prices in accord with the diminishing supply and insatiable demand in that:

ראש־חמור בשמנים כסף ורבע הקב חרייונים בחמשה־כסף:

A donkey's head sold for eighty shekels of silver and a quarter of a kab of doves' dung for five shekels.⁵¹

The impurity of the donkey calls attention to the exorbitance of the prices, though within the circumstances of siege, the people chose survival over religious obedience.⁵² The doves' dung was used for as a malodorous fuel source, but even this became a commodity in such shortage.⁵³ The severity of inflation provides a context for the shocking narrative on cannibalism.⁵⁴ This grave situation forces the king of Israel to turn to Elisha in repentance.

Just as the DtrH sets the stage with a statement on extreme inflation, Elisha's prophecy directly faces this economic concern. He opens up with two standard authoritative formulae, "Hear the word of YHWH," then "Thus says YHWH." The prophecy is simple but astonishing within the social chaos of the city under siege:

⁵¹ A qab equals about 1/6 of a seah, 1.2 liters. Sweeney explains the coarse term for dung (cf. 2 Kgs 10:27; 18:27) Sweeney, *1 and 2 Kings*, 305.

⁵² Lev 11; Deut 14. Leo Oppenheim argues that ראש־חמור ("Donkeys head") was synonymous with an unknown food. Oppenheim, "Assyriological Notes to the Old Testament," *JQR* 37 (1946): 175–176.

⁵³ Ezek 4:12–15. Another possible interpretation of doves' "dung" (חרייונים) is as a seeds or husk of a plant. For the scholarship behind this lexical identification, see Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 79.

⁵⁴ During Ashurbanipal's siege of Babylon, the residents resort to eating leather and cannibalism. M. Streck, *Assurbanipal und die Letzten Assyrischen Könige bis zum Untergange Ninivehs* (Leipzig: JC Hinrich, 1916), 36–45.

בעת מחר סאה־סלת בשקל וסאתים שערים בשקל בשער שמרון:

At this time tomorrow, a seah of flour will sell for a shekel and two seahs of barley will sell for a shekel in the gate of Samaria.⁵⁵

Such normative pricing contrasts greatly with the siege economy at hand. This phrase begins the narrative, and repeats itself again in verses 16 and 18. The declaration of prices forms a chiasmic envelope enclosing the entire structure.⁵⁶ Such a bold statement on prices causes immediate doubt among the king's staff, but due to the plundering of the retreating Aramaean camps, such a prophecy comes true. The Aramaeans had departed so suddenly that they left all sorts of supplies in their abandoned encampments, allowing the Israelites to replenish any storage consumed during the siege. In turn, the prices automatically deflate down to normative levels.

The listing of prices occurs frequently in Semitic inscriptions as a symbol of economic well-being. Almost always, such statements occur in the context of a royal inscription among the accomplishments of a ruler. An Assurbanipal (666–626 BCE) inscription reads:

In my reign (there was) plenty (and) wealth
In my years abundance was heaped up
10 homers of barley, 1 home of wine
2 seah of oil, 1 talent of wool
throughout my land, a cheap price
they buy for a shekel of silver.⁵⁷

Other annals of Assurbanipal list 30 kor of barley, three seah of oil and 30 mina of wool for one shekel each.⁵⁸ The Rassam Cylinder boasts of increasing supply in Assyria so that a camel was less than a shekel and exchangeable for a *ḥapu* of beer or a basket of dates.⁵⁹ A Nabonidus (556–539 BCE) inscription credits the deities with bringing “riches, plenty and

⁵⁵ 2 Kings 7:1. The actual equivalency is difficult to precisely ascertain, though it is clear that abundant supply will now control the siege inflation. Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 81.

⁵⁶ Note the reverse order of the items in verse 18, highlighting the chiasm. Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 83.

⁵⁷ E.E. Knudsen, “Fragments of Then Historical Texts from Nimrud—II,” *Iraq* 29 (1967): plate 23; Alan Millard, “Fragments of the Historical Texts from Nineveh: Ashurbanipal,” *Iraq* 30 (1968): 110–11; Arthur Carl Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I. Editions E, B, D, and K* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933); R. Campbell Thompson, “A Selection from the Cuneiform Historical Texts from Nineveh (1927–32),” *Iraq* 7 (1940): 98.

⁵⁸ Ernst F. Weidner, “Assurbanipal in Assur,” *AfO* 13 (1939–1941): 210–212.

⁵⁹ *ARAB* 11, 817–831.

abundance" to the land, resulting in the generous purchasing power of a single shekel of silver.⁶⁰ In the Phoenician Kilamuwa inscription, the king attests to the economic benefits of his steady rule through a leveling of prices.⁶¹ The eighth century Aramaic Panamuwa inscription boasts that his military actions brought in favorable economic conditions in that "price was cheap."⁶² Luwian inscriptions also develop the concept of ideal price via royal sponsorship.⁶³ Through equivalent values for a shekel are difficult to match across geography, these comparisons highlight the contrast with the exorbitant cost of low-grade items in besieged Samaria.⁶⁴

More significantly, these "ideal price" texts serve as royal propaganda, emphasizing the power and greatness of the monarch in setting prices. In the above royal inscriptions, the monarch actively increases the supply or productivity in pleasing a deity or expanding borders. But unlike the comparative ancient Near Eastern examples, the account of 2 Kings 6–7 shows the central authority completely inept at controlling the prices. Due to the context of social chaos, the Israelite King did not have any economic power of the city under siege.⁶⁵ In fact, the King appears as powerless as the cannibalistic mother. With such royal incompetence, prices move to

⁶⁰ The items include: barley (1 kor, 15 seah), dates (1 kor, 15 seah), sesame (11 seah), oil (3 seah), wool (5 minas), wine and beer; Wolfgang Röllig, "Erwägungen zu Neuen Stelen König Nabonids," *ZA* 56 (1964): 247–249.

⁶¹ Josef Tropper, *Die Inschriften Von Zincirli* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1993), 38; for other interpretations see *COS* 2.30.

⁶² *COS* 2.37.

⁶³ J. David Hawkins, "Royal Statements of Ideal Prices: Assyrian, Babylonian, and Hittite," in *Ancient Anatolia: Aspects of Change and Cultural Development*, eds. Jeanny Camby, Edith Porada, Brunilde Sismondo Ridgway and Tamara Stech (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986), 93–102.

⁶⁴ Studies on price movements in extant cuneiform administrative texts have supported both formalism and substantivism. For the former see Daniel C. Snell, *Ledgers and Prices: Early Mesopotamian Merchant Accounts*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1982); Veenhof, *Aspects of the Old Assyrian Trade and Its Terminology*; for the latter see Johannes M. Renger, "Patterns of Non-Institutional and Non-Commercial Exchange in Ancient Mesopotamia at the Beginning of the Second Millenium B.C.," in *Circulation of Goods in Non-Palatial Context in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Alfonso Archi (Rome: 1984), 31–123. Thus, one must avoid sweeping generalizations from limited textual data. But in general, the strongest evidence towards free market prices in the ancient Near East tend to occur in the Neo-Babylonian, Persian and Classical periods; John D. Grainger, "Prices in Hellenistic Babylonia," *JESHO* 42 (1999): 303–350; Slotsky, *The Bourse of Babylon*; Temin, *Price Behaviour in Ancient Babylon*.

⁶⁵ Compare the context for the inflation with Polanyi's description of fluctuating price, "Prices took the form of equivalencies established by authority of custom, statute or proclamation," Polanyi, "Marketless Trading in Hammurabi's Time," 20. It is important to realize that even such non-market pricing must take into account some elements of supply-and-demand.

these disastrous levels through forces of pure supply-and-demand. Significantly, 2 Kings 7 deliberately does not mention any administrative action nor decree to bring the prices down, but only description on the circumstances that causes such an increase in supply. During the siege and aftermath, price decisions do not occur in the royal house, but only at the gate, through the bargaining of an aggregate of buyers and sellers.

Parenthetically, the setting at the “gate of Samaria” is not useful in analyzing the economic mechanism. Whereas the gate can serve as a setting for free market activity, it also serves as a center for reciprocal trading as well as several other social functions.⁶⁶ Although the Hebrew Bible mentions specific gates as economic centers such as the “fish gate,” “sheep gate” and “potters gate,” these various references do not distinguish between reciprocal, distributive or market activity at these designated gates.⁶⁷ In Mesopotamia, an open market existed at the city gate, but alongside legal courts, outcast gatherings.⁶⁸ This versatility of the gate, well-attested in biblical and ancient Near Eastern literature mitigates us from making any determination on the economic structures at the “gate of Samaria.” Later in Mishnaic Hebrew, the term “gate” (שַׁעַר) actually comes to mean an exchanged, negotiated price, a movement that was already parallel in the Akkadian equivalent *babu(m)* in the first millennium.⁶⁹

Therefore, the movement of prices appears in an extreme situation, where social norms have degenerated to unthinkable levels. The portrayal of market-driven inflation runs contrary to many of the comparative ancient Near Eastern passages, which seem to suggest price movements under the active intervention of the ruling monarch. This idea complements the DtrH message of the feebleness of the king compared of the power of YHWH through his prophet Elisha. Although this is clearly an example of market forces during social upheaval, these price fluctuations say very little about normative economic structures in ancient Israel.

5.2.d. 2 Kings 4:1–7: *The Widow’s Sale of Oil*

The strongest passage for the presence of market economy appears in the widow’s sale of oil of 2 Kings 4:1–7. The theological crux of the passage

⁶⁶ Gen 23:18 narrates the example of a reciprocal exchange at the gates of the city.

⁶⁷ “Fish gate” Zeph 1:10, Neh 3:3, 2 Chr 33:14; “sheep gate” Neh 3:1,32; 12:39; “pottery gate” Jer 19:2.

⁶⁸ Wolfgang Röllig, “Der Altmesopotamische Markt,” *WdO* 8 (1976):286–295.

⁶⁹ Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 81; *CAD B*, vol. 2, 14–27; *Jastrow*, 1612–1613. Also see discussion by Eph’al and Naveh, “The Jar of the Gate,” 60.

concerns the provisions of YHWH via the prophetic ministry in comparison to the Canaanite fertility goddess. But the social subtext makes a strong case for some presence of an accessible price-adjusting market.

The laconic narrative pays particular attention to the dire situation of the widow. Elisha often ministers under the backdrop of famine and many of his miracles involve provisions for sustenance. As the wife of one of Elisha's disciples, the woman already had an economically marginalized existence. But as a widow, she represents the most disenfranchised person of the ancient Near East. At the start of the passage, the inevitable destitution has arrived, she drowns heavily in debt, she owns no property except for a container of oil and her two children stand on the verge of entering debt-slavery. Her desperate "cry" (צעק) to Elisha further highlights her grave situation. The prophet can only answer "What can I do for you," a standard reply for those that without ability to help.⁷⁰

Although the prophet cannot remedy the social culture, Elisha can improve the widow's fortunes through his miraculous powers. The narratives focuses on the miraculous act, but from a social point of view, the economic assumptions behind the miracle are equally astounding. Elisha does not provide silver or food, nor directly appeal against the anonymous debtor, though all of these options are available to the prophet. But instead, Elisha commands the widow to ask neighbors from outside (or perhaps to ask "neighbors from a *karum*," Hebrew חוץ) to borrow vessels, in order that he may supernaturally fill them with olive oil. With a full supply of oil, Elisha gives the bold command to:

לכי מכרי את-השמן ושלמי את-נשיכי ואת בניכי תחיי בנותר:

Go sell the oil and pay your debt, and you and your children can live off the remainder.⁷¹

Contrary to substantivist claims, this command implies that the most disenfranchised person of the ancient Near East, a widow, has the ability to go into some sort of market without permission, sell a commodity and receive a cash-equivalent in return to satisfy her debts. The woman could not have engaged in any sort of socially-embedded exchange, as she did not have any near kin as a widow on the verge of losing her children to debt-slavery. Elisha must have referred to pure market exchange. In addition, the remainder of oil allowed the family to subsist. For the text to

⁷⁰ See Gen 27:37 and 1 Sam 10:2, Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 56.

⁷¹ 2 Kgs 4:7b.

make sense, the widow had to have continuous access to the markets to exchange the oil for bare necessities.

The geographical setting of this passage helps to contextualize interpretation. The text does not explicitly reveal the specific location of the event, though the surrounding narrative suggests that it is a day's journey from Shunem, an economic stronghold in the northern Jezreel Valley due to access to trade routes. 2 Kings 4:38 mentions that Elisha returned back to Gilgal in the northern Samarian Hills, within strategic position of the capital. Particularly, the potential interpretation of the כֶּרֶם of 1 Kings 4:3 as a *karum* necessitates then the setting must have been a large urban center near major thoroughfares. In such settings, the kinship structures of substantivist economies have broken down, allowing for the inclusion of market exchange in place of socially-embedded trade. Such a social context is certainly plausible within the purported setting of Elisha in the Iron Age IIB.

But in focusing on the passage, the protagonist is neither a king nor even the patriarch of an extended family, but rather an impoverished widow. The unnamed market is not exclusive, but accessible. The transaction requires no reciprocal relationship, but appears completely disembedded. Although this passage is a single example, one can hardly situate it within a purely substantivist economy as articulated by Polanyi.

5.3. *References to Silver*

The analysis over the usage of silver in 1 and 2 Kings can strengthen the case for some degree of markets as presumed in 2 Kings 4:1–7. The usage of monies particularly befits the question of market exchange in ancient Israel. In order to account for the presence of coinage several thousand years before the “Great Transformation” and the subsequent introduction to a socially-disembedded economy, Polanyi analyzed the historical function of money.⁷² Based on the varied usages for money, Polanyi argued that antiquity did not know money in the modern capitalist sense:

Early society knows no “all-purpose” money. The different money uses usually fall to different symbolic objects. No one kind of object, therefore, deserves the name of money in early society; rather the term applies to a small group of them. In effect, we have here a case of “special purpose”

⁷² Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*.

money... Clearly, under such conditions the distinction between the various money uses is of great practical importance for understanding monetary institutions in early society.⁷³

Regardless of one's view on Polanyi's substantivism, this discourse over money usage provides a paradigm-changing perspective of economies. Specifically, Polanyi argued that money had three general capacities in pre-capitalist economies according to both sociological settings and operational purpose. First, money serves as a *payment*, specifically, "the discharge of obligations in which quantifiable objects change hands."⁷⁴ Polanyi stated that most payments in antiquity represent social institutions such as dowry, blood money, fines, and in more stratified societies, dues, taxes and tribute. Second, money serves as a *standard*, or "equating of amounts of different goods for definite purposes."⁷⁵ The storage-economies of the ancient Near East thus required extensive use of money as an accounting tool to administer the massive redistribution of these vast empires.⁷⁶ Third, money serves as a tool for *exchange*. But in the absence of supply-and-demand markets, such exchange had to be administered, risk-free and thus money had a subordinate function. In confronting the numismatic evidence, Polanyi emphasized the surprising fact that great trading polities like Tyre and Carthage actually lacked coinage.⁷⁷

Polanyi illustrated his categorization of pre-capitalist money with examples from Old Babylonia. He discerned barley as the primary means of payment and silver as the universal standard for accounting purposes, though he cited very little philological support.⁷⁸ For exchange, Polanyi

⁷³ Polanyi, *The Livelihood of Man*, 98–99.

⁷⁴ Polanyi, "The Economy as Instituted Process," 264. Polanyi later devotes an entire chapter on his categories of ancient money; Polanyi, *The Livelihood of Man*, 97–121.

⁷⁵ Polanyi, "The Economy as Instituted Process," 264.

⁷⁶ Polanyi, *The Livelihood of Man*, 119–120.

⁷⁷ Polanyi, "The Economy as Instituted Process," 265. Michael Dietler argues that even the minted coins of the Classical world, "(They) were a form of special-purpose valuable produced for a limited range of (largely political) practical and symbolic functions, including making state payments (e.g., for military operations and building projects), collecting taxes and tribute, and affirming the power of a polity to define standards of value," Dietler, "The Iron Age in the Western Mediterranean," in *The Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World*, 272.

⁷⁸ During the more nascent stages of Polanyi's substantivism, he does not cite any philological support; see Polanyi, "The Economy as Instituted Process," 266. But later Polanyi refers to an Old Babylonian barter text where land valued at 816 shekels of silver exchanges for chariots, horse harnesses, donkeys, ox and smaller items that also equate the same amount. He also cites the deliberate statements of equivalencies on royally-sponsored inscriptions such as the stele of Manistusu and the Laws of Eshnunna. Polanyi, *The Livelihood of Man*, 108.

insisted that money for exchange in a market sense was quite rare, and that the Babylonians used both barley and silver, alongside other staples such as oil, wool.⁷⁹ In order to counter the seemingly plentiful textual evidence, Polanyi explained the notion of risk-free trading, and the traders as official servants much more than merchants.⁸⁰

One of the strengths of Polanyi's analysis is the categorization of the different social functions of money. In fact, a perusal of 1 and 2 Kings shows distinct usages for silver / money (כסף) within the text according to Polanyi's categories.⁸¹ The Hebrew term כסף does not simply mean the commodity "silver," but also functions abstractly. Silver functions as disbursement that satisfies redistributive obligation. Most frequently, 1 and 2 Kings refers to payment of silver and gold among other items in long tribute and booty lists.⁸² The listing of silver and gold at the top of the tribute lists corresponds to Neo-Assyrian tribute lists. Also, silver fulfills obligations that rise from identification within a social matrix. A prophet speaks of exorbitant punitive fine of a talent of silver for losing a prisoner in highlighting the gravity of the Israelite *herem* laws.⁸³ The narrative on the donations to the temple assumes money for a guilt offering.⁸⁴ Some of these examples may use silver as a standard, in that the temple donation could take the form of an equivalent amount of barley or other commodity. Overall, these references to money reflect the major socially-embedded components of ancient Israel economies.

Other references to silver may fit within the social setting of a price-adjusting market, but the evidence is too spotty. The trade between Solomon and the Anatolian regions for horses may be market-driven, but it also may fit under administered trade, as it appears within a literary context of royal activity.⁸⁵ The purchase of land by Omri for two shekels may reflect the high value for the land, or it may reflect the dutiful act of Omri as the kinsman redeemer for Shmer's estate.⁸⁶ Both of these passages are too ambiguous in context to classify the exchange function.

⁷⁹ Polanyi, "The Economy as Instituted Process," 266.

⁸⁰ Polanyi, "Marketless Trading in Hammurabi's Time," 12–26.

⁸¹ These passages do not include uses of as a precious metal more than money, such as 1 Kgs 10:21; 15:15; 2 Kgs 12:14.

⁸² 1 Kgs 10:22, 25; 2 Kgs 15:19, 20; 16:8; 18:14–15; 23:33–35.

⁸³ 1 Kgs 20:39.

⁸⁴ 2 Kgs 12:17.

⁸⁵ 1 Kgs 10:29.

⁸⁶ 1 Kgs 16:24.

Ironically, two clear instances of rejection to market exchange in reference to silver hint strongly to the presence of supply-and-demand in trade. The offer of Ahab to pay money for Naboth's patrimonial land was driven by demand, but refused out of social obligation.⁸⁷ Naboth's depression suggests that a favorable price normally can overcome the social attachment to the land. Also, the exchange between Na'aman and Elisha shows a confrontation between market exchange as the context of the prophetic patron client relationship, versus the traditional social exchange.⁸⁸ In both of these examples, the ideological intent presents fidelity to a social obligation as a stronger force than utility-maximizing rationalization. This message only makes sense in an economy with decision-makers who would sacrifice their ancestral land for the right price, or one who may try to buy their way into prophetic services.

Most significantly, the numerous references to the כסף אוצרות ("silver of the treasuries") strongly correspond to Polanyi's own definition of capitalist "universal money." Polanyi claimed that all money in pre-capitalist economies was specialized and designated. But the silver of the treasury has a functional versatility to legitimately qualify it as money. Silver of the treasury is acceptable as a voluntary temple offering as well as a mandatory tax.⁸⁹ A portion of these funds sustained the priesthood of the temple.⁹⁰ Other parts of the fund helped to pay for skilled labor and materials for the temple repairs.⁹¹ The silver and gold of the treasury operate as effective bribes to both Ben-Hadad and Tiglath-Pileser III in exchange for military commitment.⁹² The silver and gold of the temple and treasury serve as the booty for King Jehoash as he takes these "monies" as war booty after breaching the Jerusalem city wall.⁹³ Hezekiah gives silver and gold from the treasury as part of the tribute to Sennacherib.⁹⁴ In other words, the silver of the temple and treasury had an elasticity for all sorts of goods and services. It was not merely symbolic money, for the biblical text implies that anyone could use it as a buying agent, otherwise 2 Kings 12:17 would make no mention of any accounting procedures. Such diverse functionality for the "silver of the treasury" fits perfectly within Polanyi's description

⁸⁷ 1 Kgs 12:2, 6.

⁸⁸ 2 Kgs 5:3–5, 26.

⁸⁹ 1 Kgs 7:51; 15:15; 2 Kgs 12:5, 17.

⁹⁰ 2 Kgs 12:8–9.

⁹¹ 2 Kgs 12:12–13.

⁹² 1 Kgs 15:18; 2 Kgs 16:8.

⁹³ 2 Kgs 14:14.

⁹⁴ 2 Kgs 18:15.

of modern “all-purpose” money. It serves as a medium of exchange for a variety of uses by both common and elite classes.

This portrayal of universal money in the Bible fits archaeological studies of silver in the Iron Age.⁹⁵ Excavations at Ekron reveal three separate silver hoards, securely dated to the seventh century BCE.⁹⁶ Field workers discovered these hoards during the 1985, 1988 and 1992 seasons. The first two hoards lied within an elite zone of Field IV, part of an enormous temple complex. The 1985 hoard, by far the largest at 330 pieces, was deliberately hidden in a small jug, underneath a floor and sealed with a 603 BCE destruction layer. Amir Golani and Benjamin Sass suggest that these pieces of broken jewelry served as a form of currency. They speculate:

The predominance of silver in the Migne hoards, as well as in other local contemporary assemblages, may possibly be explained by new economic systems imposed by the Neo-Assyrian empire during the seventh century BCE and possibly earlier. These systems may have instigated increased demands for silver as currency.⁹⁷

Considering the wide-scale industrialization at Ekron and the import of foodstuffs, the elites of Ekron needed a supply of wealth, and felt a need to secure it with an inevitably Babylonian invasion.

Besides the finds at Ekron, an aggregate view of the silver hoards supports a level of monetary economy. Through a lead-isotope analyses on silver hoards in the Iron Age, Christine Thompson theorizes the presence of a genuine monetary economy.⁹⁸ The first millennium Cisjordan precious metal hoards overwhelmingly favor silver over the palatial economy metals of gold and bronze. Furthermore, silver did not appear in the form of bureaucratic ingots, but the Levantine economy preferred the form of *Hacksilber*, shavings and slices of silver in small, unsystematized amounts, presumably for balance weighing. The usage of such silver as currency

⁹⁵ On the development of Lydian and Greek coinage and its analogies to Neo-Assyrian “money,” see Edward Lipiński, “Les Temples Neo-Assyriens et les Origines du Monnayage,” in *State and Temple Economy in the Ancient Near East*, 565–588; Daniel C. Snell, “Methods of Exchange and Coinage in Ancient Western Asia,” in *CANE*, 1487–1497; Karen Radner, “Money in the Neo-Assyrian Empire,” in *Trade and Finance in Ancient Mesopotamia*, ed. Jan Gerrit Dercksen (Leiden: 1999), 127–157.

⁹⁶ Amir Golani and Benjamin Sass, “Three Seventh-Century B.C.E. Hoards of Silver Jewelry from Tel Migne-Ekron,” *BASOR* 311 (1998): 57–81.

⁹⁷ Golani and Sass, “Three Seventh-Century B.C.E. Hoards,” 62. Raz Kletter suggests that the hoard is more indicative of an underground economy, rather than the development of a burgeoning currency; Kletter, “Iron Age Hoards,” *Levant* 35 (2003): 139–152.

⁹⁸ Thompson, “Silver in the Age of Iron.”

was apparently not restricted to the royal nor temple elites as weights were common in residences.⁹⁹ Such a shape of silver reflects a *koine* usage beyond elite palatial and temple economic circles.

Also during the seventh century, Judah adopted a standard metrological system, likely for weighing such silver. Hoards of inscribed limestone weights appear in all sorts of contexts. The metrologies of the varying weight standards allowed for flexible, interregional and dynamic conversions among the peoples. Kletter has argued that the extant weights from the Judaeian kingdom suggest a single standard, befitting the isolated, relatively poor economy.¹⁰⁰ But the attestation of the enigmatic weights of the *nsf*, *pym* and *bq'* weights insinuates several distinct metrological system. Inscriptional evidence also names distinct metrological systems in Deir 'Alla and Tel Kinrot.¹⁰¹ Even the biblical text speaks of a specific "shekel of the sanctuary" (שֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ) measured at twenty *gerahs*.¹⁰² The specific equivalency of twenty contradicts with the more prevailing Judaeian amount of twenty-four *gerahs* as attested in the Hebron Hills.¹⁰³ Considering the vast international presence, occupational specialization and the remains of *Hacksilber*, the integrated, yet multiple metrological systems befit a degree of monetary economy. Furthermore, these weight specimens are much too small for any commodity except for precious metals. References to this practice and its accompanying fraud appear in several biblical texts, implying a pervasive metrology in practice.¹⁰⁴ If indeed these weights had utilitarian usage, this suggests a level of monetary economy in Iron IIC through the usage of *Hacksilber*.

5.4. Did Israel Know Price Setting Markets?

We return to the initial question of this chapter, "Did ancient Israel know price-adjusting markets?" The passages suggest that to some limited degree, market exchange did exist. The long-distance ventures with Phoenicia are impossible without supply-and-demand as at least a partial

⁹⁹ Katz, "Commerical Activity," 268–277. One must display caution in that the presence of weights in domestic economy does not automatically imply a heavily formalist economy in all sectors.

¹⁰⁰ Kletter, *Economic Keystones*.

¹⁰¹ Eph'al and Naveh, "The Jar of the Gate," 58–65.

¹⁰² Exod 30:13; Lev 27:25; Num 3:47; 18:16; Ezek 45:12.

¹⁰³ Esther Eshel, "A Late Iron Age Ostrakon Featuring the Term לְעֶרְכָּךְ," *IEJ* 53 (2003): 151–163.

¹⁰⁴ Gen 23:16; Deut 25:13–15.

motivator. Ahab likely saw economic fortune in setting up profit-taking markets as the impetus to his disobeyal of the *herem* laws. Within their social contexts, the narratives on the prices at the gate of Samaria and the widow's sale of oil both presume a background of open markets. The portrayal of the silver of the treasury presumes a universal currency, much in line with Polanyi's concept of modern money.

But the portrayals also suggest that market exchange was still a limited force. The long-distance trade of Solomon and Ahab are both explicitly palatially organized. Another assessment is that the social settings of the Elisha episodes are extraordinary, not normative. The prices in Samaria arise out an extreme social situation, when norms have broken down. Siege economies have long served as an example where supply-and-demand will dominate despite the social propriety that existed before the siege. For Samaria, such a siege and food shortage forced people turn to cannibalism in desperation. Similarly, the widow's sale of oil presumably comes at a time of famine, and represents an extreme situation. These very isolated incidents cannot legitimately indicate the dominance of a socially disembedded economic system. Particularly in light of the plentiful examples of reciprocity and redistribution, the shortage of evidence and the extraordinary settings that surround them suggest that market exchange was not the dominant exchange pattern.

The provenance of these "market" texts is also revealing. Three of the four examples: markets in Damascus, inflation in besieged Samaria, the widow's sale of oil, all explicitly have a northern setting. The other narrative on Solomon's long-distance trade occurs under the partnership of the Phoenician littoral thus it can also qualify as a northern setting. In particular to the explicit provenance, linguistic clues within this passage may possibly allude to northern settings.¹⁰⁵

Topographically, one expects the more developed economy to arise from the north. In comparison, northern Israel land gives way to more efficient agricultural production due to areas such as the rich alluvial soil of the Jezreel valley, and the densely vegetated Galilee. The north stood

¹⁰⁵ Linguistically, some of the passages may display characteristics of northern Hebrew. 2 Kgs 4:7 uses the rare form of a 2 fs pronominal suffix ׀, an Aramaism that only occurs in here and a few poetic passages. W.M. Schniedewind and Daniel Sivan, "The Elijah-Elisha Narratives: A Test Case for the Northern Dialect of Hebrew," *JQR* 87 (1997): 303–338; *Jouion*, 290. In 1 Kgs 10:34, the usage of the preposition ׀ as "from" matches its syntactical function in Ugaritic. Gray suggests that this may indicate a northern Hebrew vestige; Gray, *I and II Kings*, 431.

in the center of major thoroughfares. The so-called *Via Maris* entered through the southwestern edge of the Jezreel Plain, guarded by settlements at Taanach, Megiddo and Yokneam, then split into a northern route through Acco, the Phoenician coast and on to Anatolia, as well as a Transjordanian route through Damascus, the Lebanese Baqa' and on to Mesopotamia. The so-called King's Highway also extended to Damascus and was of particular dispute between Israel and Aram.¹⁰⁶ These conditions, combined with proximity to the Phoenician ports north of Acco, privilege northern Israel with much more favorable conditions to develop market economies.

Archaeological evidence also fits such a portrayal of a more developed economy in the north that may allow for market exchange to develop.¹⁰⁷ In outlining the evidence for state development and centralization, Chapter Four relied more on the material culture in northern Israel than southern Judah. During the ninth century, the Omrides appear to establish elaborate capital cities in Samaria and Jezreel in contrast to the poor settlements that immediately preceded. These administrative centers, along with impressive buildings at Megiddo all have ashlar masonry, in the Iron IIB at the latest, though similar architectural style does not appear in Judah until the seventh century at Ramat Rahel. Avraham Faust's survey of domestic residences suggests a more complex stratification in the north.¹⁰⁸ According to the limited inscriptional data, Israel appears to act as a major political power in its role at Qarqar, against the Moabites, with no congruous recognition to Judah. With more advanced economic stratification and greater erosion of the extended family as the economic unit, the north is more amenable to the development of market forces.

5.5. *Summary and Conclusions*

In summary, ancient Israel must have known a degree of price-setting markets. These texts are not sensible without them, particularly the portrayal of silver of the treasury as universal money. But the limited evidence and the extreme social settings suggest that these price-setting markets

¹⁰⁶ 2 Kgs 10:33; 16:6.

¹⁰⁷ The development to capitalism is anything but a teleological progression, though this review hopes to uncover that certain circumstances in the north make market exchange plausible.

¹⁰⁸ Avi Faust, "The Social Structure of the Israelite Society."

were anything but normative. Supply-and-demand likely figured greatest in long-distance ventures in partnership with the Phoenicians. Market exchange must have existed as an exchange method, but very much in the shadow of reciprocity and redistribution, which appear as much more normative methods. But in considering the limited nature of the evidence, one must be reserved about any definitive statement. Most of all, the study of texts forces us to reconsider the legitimacy of the spirited formalist-substantivist debates in ancient Near Eastern economic history, and its limited implications in defining the ancient Israelite economy.

CHAPTER SIX

A SOCIAL ANALYSIS OF EXCHANGE IN THE BOOK OF KINGS

6.1. *Ancient Israel as a Mixed Economy*

The preceding chapters looked at each of Polanyi's three exchange mechanisms as portrayed in 1 and 2 Kings. The selection of Polanyi's categories serves as a testament to his influence in ancient Near Eastern economic history. Looking at the biblical texts through Polanyi forces more careful deliberation over the social circumstances of exchange. But with any social scientific theory, categorizations have limitations. In the case of mechanisms of economic exchange, Polanyi's classification is largely artificial, as any single transaction could contain elements of reciprocity, redistribution and market exchange. For example, the portrayals of the Solomon-Hiram trade invoked the language and tone of Late Bronze reciprocity in the spirit of the Amarna letters. But both these examples also invoke principles of comparative advantage by realizing their marginal opportunities. Tyre can supply from its vast timber resources, while Israel can create surpluses of agricultural products. In order to exchange, both Solomon and Hiram must adopt an internal redistributive policy to create surplus commodities for exports. The metaphor of fictive kinship under YHWH often motivates and enforces the movement of commodities to the central power via reciprocal exchange. Thus, this survey of the texts of 1 and 2 Kings shows ancient Israel as a mixed economy.

The identification of all three elements of exchange is suitable for pre-exilic Israel. During its lengthy history of 1 and 2 Kings, from Solomon's ascension to the return under Cyrus's decree, Israel stands as both independent polity as well as exploited vassal. The nation is topographically varied, suited for a variety of economic production. They are active in war, experiencing both resounding victory, and humiliating defeat. Such a diverse portrayal of the ancient Israelite nation necessitates the variety of economic mechanism assumed within the text.

This analysis of the portrayals of exchange suggests that the long-running substantivist-formalist debate has largely run its course. Substantivist theory has contributed greatly to the study of ancient economies by forcing an awareness of the social forces intrinsic to economic systems.

Critical readers of ancient texts must demonstrate better awareness of these social systems. But realistically, the formalist-substantivist polarity is no longer (and never was) tenable in historical reality and must give way to theoretical models with more robust explanatory power. The presence of the mixed economy and the diversity of economic systems within 1 and 2 Kings illustrate the need for multiple theoretical approaches to analyze the economies of ancient Israel. In other words, the use of any single overarching model to explain all ancient Near Eastern economic systems is naive. For example, Wallerstein's World-System Theory provides a useful methodological basis for studying the complex economic system of the Neo-Assyrian empire. With a powerful core, the Assyrians could exploit distant lands when deemed favorable such as the Arabian trade routes and the Phoenician littoral. Weberian patrimonialism can identify the centrality of the extended family as an economic unit before the mass deportations and refugees of the eighth century. Adam Smith's classical political economy can explain the non-royal mercantile activity of the Tyrian ventures in Isaiah 23 and Ezekiel 27. But none of these three theories can adequately cover all periods of all regions. Therefore, future studies of the economies of the Southern Levant must invoke better, integrative theories, encompassing different methodologies, which dialogue with each other.¹

6.2. *Ancient Israel as an Informal Economy*

The portrayals of exchange in 1 and 2 Kings give voice to economic transactions largely hidden from both epigraphic and archaeological witnesses. In particular, the exchange activities of the marginalized and their participation in the informal economy deserve particular merit. These direct and indirect references to the informal economy serve value in reconstructing the ancient Israelite and Judaeon economy. Chapter Three highlighted the reciprocal sustenance of the prophetic office, apart from the acknowledgement of the government. As critiques of the northern kingship, the prophets could not expect coverage under the umbrella of

¹ One potential theoretical model that can spur new directions in ancient Israelite economies appears in a recent edited volume of classicists. Rather than sustaining singular theoretical models, this volume focuses on the major factors to economic structures: ecology, demography, households, institutions and technology; Scheidel, Morris and Saller, *The Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World*.

royal provision, thus they sustain themselves through reciprocal relationships. Within the biblical texts, they engage in underground transactions with widows, foreign enemies and even royalty. The reciprocal activity of sustenance materials in exchange for prophetic service occur outside the centralized tracking, yet this activity is acceptable within the social setting. These prophets eschew typical material considerations, yet they still needed to survive. Thus, the reciprocal exchange help to incorporate them into an informal economic world.

Aside from the prophetic reciprocity, the biblical text presumes the existence of additional informal sectors within the larger economic structures. For example, the extent of Solomon's oppression eventually drives the northern split. But before reaching such a point, one could reasonably expect the prevalence of illicit means to avoid corvée service. Solomon's centralized royal directives appears particularly susceptible to additional regulation by informal economy, whether bribery or nepotism.² Aside from the centralized labor, these illicit controls likely also effect compulsory in-kind payments and military service. With the temple redistribution, the statement "no accounting was necessary" precludes a previously existing level of corruption in the temple treasury that would necessitate accounting in the first place. The reference to caravan tolls implied by passages like 1 Kings 11:14–22 and 1 Kings 10:14–15 also calls for the presence of bandits and smugglers preying on the arduous desert routes.

Most significantly, the constant backdrop of war and invasion created a social situation particularly fertile for the development of the informal economy.³ Such extreme social circumstances often force the breakdown of normative "official" distributive elements. Wartime chaos, in turn, fuels the introduction of underground means for distribution. In particular, the food shortages of the siege of Samaria catalyzed the agreement between cannibalizing women as the most shocking example of informal exchange. Although this account in 2 Kings 6 serves to portray the strength of YHWH through the prophet over the inept king, the inclusion of this morally egregious agreement signals the prevalence of a wider informal economic network during wartime. In addition, the loss of young adult males to military conscription and the corvée for fortification construction undoubtedly resulted in a significant labor problem in Israel and Judah. Unlike the

² The explicit commands against bribery further solidify its prevalence in ancient Israel: Ex 23:8; Deut 10:17; 16:19; 27:25.

³ Carolyn Nordstrom, *Shadows of War: Violence, Power, and International Profiteering in the Twenty-First Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

centralized corvée requirements in Egypt and Mesopotamia, the yearly diversified planting schedule in Israel required consistent labor year-round, thus any significant period of absence could detrimentally affect a local community's productivity.⁴ The central government, too busy with military preparations, likely did little to offset the loss of precious labor within the agricultural farmsteads. The creation of illicit means to acquire labor must have existed as well.

The many wars created more lasting repercussions on the informal economy.⁵ Based on limited knowledge of demography, ancient societies had a significantly large number of orphans due to the decreased lifespan from disease and shortages.⁶ The frequencies of wars in ancient Israel surely exacerbated this figure. The multitude of laws concerning orphans in biblical codes, as well as the greater ancient Near East attests to a prevalent social issue.⁷ Judging from both biblical and extra-biblical evidence, these orphans had limited options available to them. Some fortunate ones were adopted, perhaps even formally grafted into a new kinship structure, but more fell into a lifetime of indentured servitude. During the aftermath of invasion, however, the sudden spike in orphans likely caused more to be neglected rather than "protected" into slavery.⁸ Without any legitimate social network, they were often left to forage for themselves, and all of their economic activity falls under the informal sector. A corollary effect is the development of the refugee economy after the wave of Neo-Assyrian invasions of the late eighth century. The major resettlements such as the migrations to Jerusalem in the late eighth century and the development of the Judean desert in Iron IIC required major adaptation to the social

⁴ Holladay, "The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah," 368–395.

⁵ A modern survey at the informal economy during periods of war shows its stunning repercussions that completely elude government measurement and protection. Ancient Israel likely experienced parallel repercussions when war brought about such drastic destruction and ensuing social changes. Nordstrom, *Shadows of War*.

⁶ Walter Scheidel, "Demographic and Economic Development in the Ancient Mediterranean World," *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics* 160 (2004): 743–757; Scheidel, "Progress and Problems in Roman Demography," in *Debating Roman Demography*, ed. Walter Scheidel (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 1–81.

⁷ For example, Exod 22:21; Deut 10:18; 14:29; 24:17, 19–21; 26:13; 27:19. Also see the recently discovered Khirbet Qeiyafa ostrakon mentions the widow, and the orphan in the context of a social justice mandate, see Misgav, Garfinkel and Ganor, "The Ostrakon," 243–257; Yardeni, "Further Observations," 259–260.

⁸ The institution of slavery in the ancient Near East had tremendous variability. For example, Deut 15:16–17 protects a slave from unwanted manumission.

structures of refugee economy.⁹ These turbulent post-war periods surely necessitated informal structures to regulate the economy.

Despite some of the disparaging nomenclature (black market, shadow economy, illicit trade), the informal economy does not necessarily reflect morally questionable activity in regards to ancient Israel. Whereas modern study of the informal economy often focuses on degrading activity such as drug trafficking and prostitution, the underground economy only exists when the current social structure cannot adequately provide access to goods and services to all people. These circumstances force other renegade economic activity otherwise deemed as legitimate. Studies on the informal economy suggest that such illegal activity often emerges during a political change that makes previously acceptable activity illegal.¹⁰ The underground economy essentially provides a path to an earlier method of exchange, often associated with kin-based reciprocity. The major political change associated with the rise of the Neo-Assyrian empire created such upheaval. In the short run, economies were forced to centralize and move to greater specialization. Even though such specialized economies produce more efficiently, the immediate transition brings upheaval and loss of earnings for certain economic units. In the long run, the Neo-Assyrian empire and ensuing controlling polities executed a policy that eroded the extended family kin-based structure. The nascent economic systems had multiple inefficiencies, and these inefficiencies prompted the rise of informal economic sectors. Future studies must explicitly recognize this long neglected sector in studies of economy.

6.3. *The Economic System of Israel and Judah*

Because of the limited evidence, any reconstruction of the complete social system of exchange is largely speculative. The elements of nature have continuously eroded relevant material remains over the last three millennia. The chance of archaeological discovery undoubtedly leaves many important testimonies hidden under the multiple levels of the uncovered tells. Epigraphic texts ignore most of the non-elite units of the ancient

⁹ Aaron Burke introduces a new methodology for tracing the activities of refugees in the material culture; Burke, "The Archaeology of Refugees: Case Studies from the Levant in the Iron Age," (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, Ga, 2010).

¹⁰ Gaughan and Ferman, "Towards an Understanding of the Informal Economy," 15–25.

economy. The description of economies within biblical texts remains secondary to the ideological intent of the compilers. But despite such selective evidence, the analysis of the individual exchange will only make better sense in the context of a more integrated matrix. The following construction of the economic framework of Israel and Judah is merely a working hypothesis, subject to future revision based on continued excavations of archaeological sites, analysis on the expanding epigraphic texts and further dialogue over biblical interpretation.

6.3.a. *The Local Economy*

At the beginning of the Iron Age II, the extended family served as the basic economic unit, in line with the general culture of the ancient Near East.¹¹ In order to meet the household necessities, members of the family engaged in a variety of different productive behaviors as their patrimonial land allowed: agriculture, horticulture, herding, fishing weaving and pottery. Some surpluses allowed this family to exchange with other groups through reciprocity. During the early state formation of Israel, this family had to occasionally supply corvée labor for the centralized building projects of Iron Age IIA. They also may have provided a modest amount of in-kind payment to sustain the central government. 1 Kings 4:9–17 likely refers to a more complex administrative text for such a project. The precise level of redistribution is unknown as the biblical texts give two opposing pictures of benevolence and oppression in the royal administration. But a few clues suggest that the redistribution was a significant but not domineering portion of the economy. The lack of international products in the Southern Levant suggests that extended families lived off their patrimonial land to produce a diversity of products for their own consumption. This diversity must have naturally incorporated the topographical advantages. For example, those farmsteads in the Jezreel Valley may have yielded agriculturally intensive crops, whereas those in the Negev probably relied more on herding. But because the extended family served as a single economic unit, all farmsteads had to diversify to insure against the inevitable seasons of different crop failures.¹²

¹¹ Stager, "The Archaeology of the Family," 1–35.

¹² The Gezer calendar attests to such diversification, with mention of at least five agricultural products in a single brief inscription. David Hopkins, "The Dynamics of Agriculture in Monarchical Israel," in *SBL 1983 Seminar Papers*, ed. Kent Harold Richards (Chico, Ca: Scholars, 1984), 177–202.

The movement to the Iron Age IIB period saw the development of redistribution. The perceived threat from Neo-Assyrian encroachment forced major structural upgrades requiring a grand redistributive system. The evidence of the epigraphic texts suggest that production focused on marginal opportunities, thereby, the households had to limit agricultural production to grain, wine and oil, and send certain in-kind payments to the center. The diverse imports and luxury goods of Iron IIB imply that northern Israel had great interest in acquiring preciousities through the redistributive measures. Judah also shows some specialization during the Iron IIB. But the topographical restrictions of less rainfall and limited access to trade routes likely served to limit the extent of stratification. Accordingly, the domestic residences show only two social classes in Judah Iron IIB in comparison to the three clear classes in contemporary northern Israel.¹³ Also, the northern urban centers likely had limited markets to help people take advantage of comparative efficiencies, though little evidence attests to a prevalent existence of such markets outside of major urban centers of the north.

But by producing such a limited number of crops, the individual farmstead had to rely on receiving other subsistence goods from the central power. Combining the capricious nature of agriculture with the redistributive political structure inevitably resulted in major shortages, enough to warrant a social critique from the so-called eighth century prophets. Before such specialization, farmsteads could at least rely on livestock to provide some subsistence during times of crop failure. But when these same farmsteads specialized production to meet redistributive measures, the lack of diversity exposed them to periods of drought and blight.¹⁴ The frequent references to famine within biblical curses suggests both its pervasiveness and that the redistributive social structure particularly broke down during these seasonal difficulties.¹⁵ Out of these systemic inefficiencies, the informal economy likely formed a major role in creating access to resources through non-sanctioned means particularly for the disenfranchised. But developing these informal measures likely only mitigated the

¹³ Faust, "The Social Structure of the Israelite Society."

¹⁴ Marvin Chaney, "Bitter Bounty," 15–30.

¹⁵ 1 Kgs 8:37; 18:2; 2 Kgs 4:38; 6:25; 7:4; 7:12; 8:1; 25:3. The narrative of Joseph's reign in Egypt provides an interesting political commentary. A wise leader, chosen by YHWH has the foresight to account for future famines, then plan and store goods judiciously to provide for the people's future need; Gen 41:35–37.

social injustices. The elite opulence and the so-called eighth century prophetic themes suggest that many fell into unbreakable poverty cycles.

Under foreign hegemony, the Iron IIC saw crystallization of this large-scale redistribution and specialization to an unprecedented level though the level of direct Neo-Assyrian involvement is still under debate. With the huge number of refugees populating isolated settlements and the systematic deportations by the Assyrians, the extended family ceased to serve as the main economic unit. Instead, major specialization centers began to appear in urban centers. These population movements eroded generations of patrimonially-centered land tenure, and left the control of this resource largely in the state to create production centers. Now, nuclear families worked these centers, and likely sent major quotas to the center in accord with royal redistributive policies. These commodities, particularly the marginally opportunistic items such as grain, wine and oil, arrived at ports, then shipped off to trading partners or political overlords. Sites like Ekron appear set for large production of single products, intended primarily for export and not local consumption. Instead of a distributive focus on family sustenance, micro-economic decisions revolved on the maximal production of the exportable commodity. In turn, the workers of these zones received a cash-equivalent allowance along with rations. The specialized olive presser from Ekron or the wheat harvester from the Negev likely received rations, but money equivalents functioned as a much more versatile currency to meet with the diverse payment needs. Shifting the basic economic unit from subsistent extended family to large scale redistribution allowed for the production decisions of industrial zoning and henceforth, "capital investment" such as groves of olive trees. The large-scale development of such an industry is unlikely within single extended families, yet perfectly sensible within an international export nation. During the later stages of the seventh century, Judah likely also experienced an ideological centralization based on the religious reforms of Josiah in the wake of Assyrian weakening. Economically, the description of temple taxes suggests a modest assessment of the Judaeans families dedicated to the Jerusalem temple, centralizing power and further marginalizing any local sanctuaries.

These movements towards centralization required a range of differentiated service sectors. Thus, as Israel and Judah centralized, the nations sustained a bureaucratic class, essentially absent during the preceding Iron I phase. A developed state needed trained workers to administer the military in its manifold services as well as many different sorts of artisans. The rations and collections required accountability to the individual com-

ponents. The bureaucratic system could motivate the suppliers, whether through force, financial incentive or both. The bureaucracy administered the high level of specialization, and thus created more aggregate prosperity. Unlike the harvester, the bureaucrat did not produce anything of tangible productivity, thus had to rely more on a combination of rations and payments.

But despite the increased aggregate productivity that comes along with specialization, the individuals met serious difficulties with this transition. The lack of larger kin structures leaves the socially disenfranchised as particularly vulnerable. Sociologists have distinguished the stages of state formation along the lines of kinship values.¹⁶ During the inchoate period, kinship and community dictate the economic decisions. As people move towards more developed identity as statehood, government officials begins to replace kinship values with a more sterile administrative policy. Several scholars have placed this sociological model to the development of the monarchy, at least in its retrojection from the moments of textualization.¹⁷ As a result of this development of statehood, Israel moved towards an export economy, which further eroded egalitarianism.

6.3.b. *The International Economy*

The Iron IIA witnessed a transformation in the Southern Levant from a disintegrated recovering society to the beginnings of a centralized state. In centralizing resources, Israel was able to participate in the greater Phoenician exchange network, but such participation was likely more modest than the DtrH portrayal. By controlling strategic overland and coastal entry points, Israel likely provided access for the Phoenicians. The provision of foodstuffs to the Phoenicians is plausible as it does invoke the respective comparative advantages. In return for the access to ports and possibly grain, the Israelites received materials and expertise for a central building program, though the Kings accounts of massive payments and imports from around the world is unsubstantiated in the material record.

Within the Iron Age IIB, the international economic presence of Israel expanded to the point of international trade. The conflict between the Aramaeans and the Assyrian empire allowed a limited autonomy to

¹⁶ Henri J.M. Claessen and Peter Skalnik, *The Early State* (Paris 1978).

¹⁷ Christa Schäfer-Lichtenberger, "Sociological Biblical Views of the Early State," in *The Origins of the Israelite States*, eds. Volkmar Fritz and Philip R. Davies (JSOTSS 228, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 78–105.

Israel to more aggressively pursue material fortunes in partnership with Phoenicia. Not only did Israel allow access, they likely supplied vast commodities in return for international luxuries. Thus, the Iron IIB sees an explosion in foreign pottery and luxury goods with Phoenicia and her trading partners. The centralized building program shows many Phoenician architectural characteristics. Major cities have significant amounts of Phoenician pottery as well as artistic objects, ivories, glass and decorated shells. Aegean and Cypriot pottery also appears in limited sites. Aside from the thriving seatriade, Judah likely benefited from the Arabian access as some of the pottery vessels in the City of David have South Semitic epistolary inscriptions.¹⁸

Finally in Iron Age IIC, the significance of Judah outweighed the geographically-favorable Israel. Whereas the Neo-Assyrians deliberately kept the populations down in the north except for their administrative centers, their policies either directly or indirectly appear to develop the agricultural potential of the south. Faust and Weiss study the different commodities in relation to relative prices and spatial distance to port.¹⁹ They convincingly argue that the Iron IIC saw the emergence of large zones of production focused on the profitable commodities of grain, wine and oil for export to the international scene. The return profits went to either Assyria as tribute or Phoenicia as profit, and the grain from Judah helped to maintain these intensive economic zones. At the same time, the local economy enjoyed wealth as the Coastal Plain, Judaeen Desert, Negev all display large amounts of imported pottery and exotica. Much of the remaining wood in the Negev originates in the Lebanese mountains.²⁰ The capital, Jerusalem, shows remains of sealife originating from the Mediterranean, Red Sea and the Nile, suggesting significant contact with these regions. Only the partnership with Phoenicia allowed such complex, specialized zones of trading during the final century of the Iron Age II.

In all, the ancient economies of Israel and Judah were complex and integrated. The communal values of the society permeated the mechanisms of exchange, and the political and social structures enforced the adoption and maintenance of these methods. During such a tumultuous time of the DtrH redactions, it is fitting that such a diverse portrayal of exchange may

¹⁸ Yigal Shiloh, "A South Arabian Inscription from the City of David, Jerusalem," *PEQ* 119 (1987): 9–18.

¹⁹ Faust and Weiss, "Judah, Philistia, and the Mediterranean World," 71–92.

²⁰ Nili Liphshitz and Gideon Biger, "Cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus Libani*) in Israel During Antiquity," *IEJ* 41 (1991): 166–175.

only be interpreted as a mixed economy, invoking principles of reciprocity, redistribution and market exchange of varying emphases according to the social context. With developing sophistication in methodological controls, greater awareness of social circumstances and continued publication of corresponding archaeological reports, the future of economic study of ancient Israel appears promising.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1. *Overall Summary and Conclusions*

This work is the first major treatment on the mechanisms of economic exchange as portrayed in biblical texts. Although the biblical text is admittedly more ideological than historical, this ideology emerges from specific historical contexts. A study of different exchange mechanisms alongside archaeological, anthropological and comparative epigraphic evidence can reveal hints towards the implicit economic structure. By focusing the accounts of 1 and 2 Kings, this study can benefit from a diversity of economic contexts, including rich and barren lands, elite royalty and disenfranchised widows, luxury goods and subsistence, cosmopolitan centers and isolated communities. Most importantly, the portrayals in Kings allows for a degree of comparison with the archaeological understanding of the Iron Age.

I have used the well-worn Polanyian categories of reciprocity, redistribution and market exchange to organize the presentation of materials. By placing Polanyi's substantivist approach within a larger context of intellectual history, one can quickly understand the depth of complexity surrounding ancient economies and the need for a plurality of theoretical approaches. Despite such manifold expressions of economic activity, Polanyi's simple yet meaningful categories help to isolate the different exchange mechanisms, and how they contribute to the greater societal matrix.

The prevalence of reciprocity in the ancient Near Eastern economic world underscores the importance of social relations in all exchange activities. Both local and international reciprocity display a language of kinship and a desire to maintain honor. Economic decisions are fewer as exchange arises from duty and obligation rather maximalizing behavior. Yet, participation in reciprocal exchange often masks a deeper desire for material accumulation. In other words, reciprocity as an exchange mechanism invokes both principles of formalism and substantivism.

Redistribution is the natural repercussion of a politically powerful center. The degree of authority at the center naturally correlates to

the pervasiveness of such redistributive policy. As ancient Israel formed and crystallized her existence into a unified polity, they developed more intensive measures of specialization and redistribution. The threat of the Neo-Assyrian empire forced a more intensive redistributive policy, which reached its culmination in the Iron IIC period with major industrial zones designed for massive export of materials. The DtrH gives a theologically mixed assessment of these redistributive measures in line with the economic reality. Overall, specialization leads to greater economic efficiencies. But this surplus often results in a more precarious social setting, disrupting stable kinship economic units, and replacing them with stratified classes, replete with poverty, envy and discontentment. Kings gives voice to this element after verse 9:1, particularly through the judgment of the marginalized prophets.

The existence of some level of market exchange is quite certain, though the ensuing repercussions are debatable. Many of these discussions go back to theoretical grounding of Adam Smith versus Karl Polanyi. Regulation by supply-and-demand was likely beneficial in some respects. By taking advantage of opportunity costs, the overall aggregate utility commensurately rises. At the same time, such increased productivity also contributed to greater social stratification and the disenfranchisement of large sectors of society. In looking at the assumptions within some of the exchange narratives and considering the artificial nature of Polanyian categories, supply-and-demand inevitably played a portion in the economic structure, though it likely was limited in light of the prevalence of the other two mechanisms.

All of these functions combine to form an integrated economy. Ancient Israel and Judah went through different periods of complex economies, as a part of the turbulent Iron Age II. Although not explicit in all biblical texts, these economic structures form the background of all genres of biblical literature, and continued study will undoubtedly enhance both philological and theological approaches to biblical text.

7.2. Directions for Future Research: Post-exilic Portrayals of Economic Exchange

I hope that this study can stimulate continued investigation into the economic structures behind biblical texts. Economics are such a fundamental part of our society that their very presuppositions are often subconsciously transposed as an analytical paradigm. Deliberate study on the essential

natures of economic transactions can help stimulate a more native understanding of both the biblical world and the ancient economy.

The natural continuation of this trajectory of study is into the post-exilic period and its associated texts. The study of 1 and 2 Kings has determined that as the social situation transformed with the dominance of the Neo-Assyrian rise, the economic structures underwent corresponding transformations. The upheaval of the exile and the return certainly created huge disturbances and further paradigmatic shifts in the social structure. The radical break in material culture from the Babylonian destructions combined with the explicit economic orientation of post-exilic biblical literature is particularly tantalizing. Many have detected some of the isolated incidences of such a study, but a more complete survey of biblical literature portrayals, themes, ideologies and lexicography can help continue this study.

In addition to the tremendous social upheaval within the biblical texts, the post-exilic period has many characteristics that would benefit a focused study. Large Neo-Babylonian and Persian cuneiform archives help bring light to the economic world of the period. Although these archives have a Mesopotamian provenance, the sheer volume of material helps in determining real economic equivalencies in the greater ancient Near Eastern world. The period shows numerous economic evidence within Levantine material culture such as sealings, bullae and ostraca collections. The development and proliferation of coinage shows signs of a different type of economic structure. Similarly, the study of the post-exilic period allows for more interaction with the developed research on Hellenistic economics. Together, an economic look at post-exilic texts can help to contextualize the role of Yehud in the midst of east-west contact in the Mediterranean basin. It would also further clarify the sociological setting behind the emergence of Judaism.

Overall, this monograph has attempted to analyze a more deliberately functional model of ancient Israelite economy. The impact of the implied economy on understanding of the social circumstances of textualization can greatly aid philological analysis of biblical texts. On a wider scale, a more sophisticated knowledge of ancient Israel's economy can propel and control the many subfields that arise from the Hebrew Bible as sacred text, such as social ethics and theology. Although the potential impact in biblical scholarship stands large, this study presents itself as only a beginning. I hope that future scholarship will likewise see similar studies as profitable.

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INDEX OF ANCIENT SOURCES

Biblical Texts

Genesis		Numbers	
12:50	11	3:47	177
18:1–10	90	10:29, 31	158
18:5	91	12:18	91
18:6	97	18:16	177
19:1–11	90	27:1–11	143
21:32	79		
22:17	135	Deuteronomy	
23:4–16	91	9:1–9	138
23:10–16	144	10:17	183
23:16	143, 177	10:18	184
23:18	170	12	5
24:19–41	90	14	167
27:37	171	14:29	184
32:13	135	15:16–17	184
32:14	95	16:19	183
33:10	95	17:6–17	81
37:28	158	17:16	160
37:36	158	24:17	184
41:35–37	187	24:19–21	184
43:11	95, 99	25:5–10	143
45:11	135	25:13–15	177
47:12	135	26:13	184
49:15	138	27:19	184
		27:25	183
Exodus		28:68	128
1:11	137	33:29	85
1:14	138		
6:9	138	Joshua	
7:3	138	6:19, 24	147
13:15	138	9:5, 12	92
18:10	79	16:10	137, 138
22:21	184	24:25	79
23:8	183		
30:13	177	Judges	
		3:15	95
Leviticus		4:17–22	90
11	167	6–8	158
25:8–12	145	6:18	95
25:8–31	143	19:1–25	90
25:25–27	145	19:5, 8	91
25:29–31	145		
27:8	150	1 Samuel	
27:12	150	1:24	124
27:14	150	9:6–8	93
27:25	177	10	77

10:1	171	6:30	136
10:2	171	6:32	136
10:3	124	6-8	136, 143
10:27	95	7:9-11	136
25:1	124	7:47	136
		7:48-50	136
2 Samuel		7:51	136, 147, 175
2:13	121	8:37	187
5:11	76	8:62-63	8, 132, 151
7	5	9	8, 82, 116,
8:2	95		157
12:30	136	9-10	85, 155, 157
16:1	124	9-12	138
16:1-4	143	9:1	138
17:29	99	9:1-9	80, 81, 83
24:9	134	9:11-14	83
24:21-24	91	9:11-15	80
24:42	143	9:14	84
		9:15	115
1 Kings		9:15-23	8
1-11	138	9:15-32	132, 138
2:12-5:14	76	9:19	138
3-8	135	9:21	137
4:7	8, 131,	9:26-28	155-164
	134-135, 151	10:1-2	9
4:7-19	133-134	10:1-13	86
4:9-17	186	10:8	85
4:20	135	10:10	9, 85, 136
4:20-5:8	8	10:11	136
5	78, 82, 83,	10:11-12	155-164
	135, 155	10:11-22	8
5-9	139	10:13	9, 85
5:1	9, 95	10:14-15	157, 183
5:3	133	10:14-29	86
5:8	137	10:15	159
5:11	82	10:21	174
5:15	77	10:22	155-164,
5:15-26	136		174
5:15-32	76, 83	10:23-29	157
5:17-18	76	10:25	95, 174
5:17-19	83	10:26-29	8, 9, 156,
5:20	78, 162		160
5:21	79, 83	10:28-29	155-164
5:21-23	78	10:29	174
5:22	162	10:34	178
5:26	79, 83	11:1	138
5:27	134, 137, 151	11:14-22	157, 183
5:27-32	8, 10, 132	12	139
5:31	136	12:2	175
5:32	135	12:4	8, 138
6:1-7:51	8	12:5-6	142
6:20-21	136	12:6	175
6:22	136	12:10-11	8
6:28	136	12:11	139

12:24-13:34	91	5:17-18	94
13	10, 67, 93	5:20	96
13-14	97	5:26	94, 175
13:1-10	90	5:27-32	10
13:11-32	92	6	183
13:22	92	6-7	169
13:30-31	92	6:1-7	96
14:1	92, 93	6:24-25	167-170
14:1-3	92, 100	6:25	187
14:3	9	7	170
14:25-26	145-146	7:1	168
14:26	147	7:1-18	167-170
15:15	174, 175	7:3	95
15:16-20	88	7:4	187
15:18	175	7:6	160
15:20	149	7:12	187
16:24	10, 143, 174	7:16	168
17:1-6	95	7:18	168
17:4-9	135	8:1	187
17:8-15	96	8:1-6	10
17:10-11	97	8:7-11	95
17:23	77	8:8-9	9
18:2	187	10:26-28	111
18:4	135	10:27	167
18:13	135	10:33	179
20	10, 165	12:5	175
20:1-6	145-146	12:5-17	10, 141
20:1-8	9	12:8-9	175
20:1-34	148	12:12-13	175
20:3	145	12:14	174
20:22	135	12:16	142-143,
20:34	10, 79, 150,	12:17	152
	164-167	12:17-18	174, 175
20:39	174	12:17-19	9, 146
21:1-16	10	12:18-19	147
21:1-19	144	14:13-14	145-146
22:39	126	14:14	8, 145-147
22:49	164	15:17-22	175
		15:18	9, 146, 148
2 Kings		15:19	149
3	146		149, 152,
3:4	9, 145, 147		174
3:4-27	148	15:19-20	145-146
4	10	15:20	174
4:1-7	16, 170-173	16:5-9	88
4:3	165, 172	16:6	179
4:7	1, 178	16:7	152
4:8-13	10	16:8	174, 175
4:38	172, 187	16:8-9	9, 145-148
5	96	17:3	95, 145
5:3-5	175	17:3-6	9, 146, 148
5:8-27	93	18:13-16	145-146,
5:15	78, 96		148
5:16	94	18:13-18	9, 147

18:14-15	174	26:11	165
18:15	175	27	82, 159, 182
18:27	167	27:3	82, 159
20:12	95	27:9	82
20:12-15	87, 88	27:12	82
20:13	88	27:13	82, 159
20:20	122	27:14	82
22:3-7	152	27:15	82, 159
22:4-7	10	27:16	82
22:5-8	143	27:17	82
22:7	143	27:18	82
22:9	10	27:19	82
23:15-18	92	27:20	82, 159
23:31-35	146	27:21	82
23:33-35	145, 146,	27:22	82, 136, 159
	174	27:23	82, 159
23:35	149	27:24	82, 159
23:37	150	27:25	82
25:3	187	27:27	82
25:11-20	9	27:33	82
25:13-17	136	27:34	82
		27:36	82
Isaiah		27:5	77
10:6	165	31:8	77
14:8	77	37:2	86
23	158, 182	45:12	177
23:2	158	47:7	86
23:3	158	47:9	86
23:8	158	47:10	86
23:18	158, 159		
30:14	124	Hosea	
30:18	85	10:6	95
36:2	122		
37:24	77	Amos	
39:1-4	87	2:9	77
41:19	77		
55:13	77	Zephaniah	
60:13	77	1:10	170
61:6	30	3:6	165
66:12	30		
Jeremiah		Zechariah	
13:12	124	11:1-2	77
19:2	170		
22:7, 14-15	77	Psalms	
32:6-15	144	1:1	85
32:9	143	2:12	85
37:21	165		
48:12	124	Job	
		5:17	85
Ezekiel		38:37	124
4:12-15	167		
17:3	77	Proverbs	
17:22-25	77	8:34	85
		16:20	85

Lamentations		9:7–10	71
2:19	165	11:16–22	73
4:1	165	13	71
4:2	124	14	71
		16:19–34	73
Ecclesiastes		16:22–34	73
8:15	135	16:32–33	71
		17:51	71
Daniel		19	73
11:38	136	20:46–59	73
		22	71
Ezra		22:3	160
2:69	147	25	71
7:69–70	147	26–27	73
		27:45–51, 104–109	73
Nehemiah		27:72–73	78
3:1	170	29	73
3:3	170	33	76
3:32	170	33:10–16	77
12:39	170	41:14–15	73
13:12	147	120	71
1 Chronicles		Josephus, <i>Antiquities</i>	
1:16	156	8.236	91
18:18	86	10.30	88
26:27	147		
29:7	147	Other Texts	
29:8	147	<i>ANET</i> 279	160
		<i>ANET</i> 294	128
2 Chronicles		<i>ANET</i> 307	79
2:7	79	<i>ARAB</i> 11, 817–819	168
2:16	137	Arad Ostraca 2	125
8:1–2	83	Arad Ostraca 24	125
9:9	86	<i>ARM</i> 5.20	160
24:24	86	<i>COS</i> 1.41	77
30:13	86	<i>COS</i> 2.23	112
32:29	86	<i>COS</i> 2.30	169
33:14	170	<i>COS</i> 2.37	169
		<i>COS</i> 2.113A	113
Amarna Tablets (<i>EA</i>)		<i>COS</i> 2.113F	118
3:13–22	73	<i>COS</i> 2.118A	163
4:36–50	73	<i>COS</i> 2.118D	163
7:62–63	73	<i>COS</i> 3.94	75
9:6–18	73		

INDEX OF MODERN AUTHORS

- Abraham, Kathleen 159
 Achenbach, Reinhard 99
 Adam, Klaus-Peter 5, 6
 Aharoni, Miriam 108–109, 121
 Aharoni, Yohanan 107–109, 119–121, 125
 Albright, William F. 11, 109, 112
 Algaze, Guillermo 41
 Alt, Albrecht 11, 40, 134, 144
 Amiran, Ruth 108–109, 121
 Andinach, Pablo R. 19
 Astour, Michael 38
 Aubet, Maria E. 81
 Avigad, Nahman 110, 119
 Avruch, Kevin 71, 80
 Aznar, Carolina 25
- Bahat, Dan 109
 Bahn, Paul 3
 Baker, David L. 18
 Ballard, Robert D. 130
 Bar-Yosef, Ofer 110
 Barkay, Gabriel 107, 114, 117, 120, 122, 156
 Baroja, Julio Caro 89
 Barstad, Hans 14
 Baumgarten, Yaacov 109, 119, 121
 Bedford, Peter R. 18
 Begg, Christopher T. 88
 Bell, Carol 20
 Ben Tor, Amnon 108–109, 119, 121
 Ben-Barak, Zafira 143, 144
 Ben-Yosef, E. 114
 Benenson, Itzhak 123
 Berliner, Joseph 66
 Bienkowski, Piotr 25, 129
 Biger, Gideon 190
 Bikai, Patricia 157
 Binford, Lewis 12
 Biran, Avraham 110
 Blakely, Jeffrey A. 133
 Blaug, Mark 32
 Bleiberg, Edward 68
 Bliss, Frederick J. 111
 Boaz, Phil 47
 Boer, Roland 37, 40
 Botto, Alejandro F. 19
 Bowles, Samuel 48
 Brandes, Stanley 89
 Brettler, Marc 16
- Brinkman, Jan A. 88
 Brueggemann, Walter 79, 164
 Bücher, Karl 63
 Buchholz, Todd G. 18
 Buis, Pierre 7
 Bunimovitz, Shlomo 109
 Burke, Aaron A. 120, 185
 Burns, Robert M. 16
 Byrne, Ryan 128
- Cahill, Jane 123
 Camp, Claudia 18
 Campbell, John 89
 Campbell, Thomas 62
 Cantrell, Deborah O'Daniel 111, 156, 160
 Caporaso, James A. 33, 35
 Casarosa, Carlo 32
 Cassel, Dieter 66
 Chaney, Marvin 18, 118, 187
 Childs, Brevard S. 84
 Cho, Yong Sik 18
 Cichy, Ulrich 66
 Claburn, W. Eugene 18
 Claessen, Henri J.M. 189
 Cogan, Mordechai 91, 92, 134, 167–168, 170–171
 Cohen, Raymond 72, 73
 Cole, Lisa Marsio 20
 Cook, Scott 61–63
 Crook, Zeba A. 68, 93
 Cross, Frank Moore 5, 6, 77, 123
- Dale, Garreth 52, 57, 58
 Dalton, George 62, 63
 Dandamaev, Muhammed 37, 149
 Davies, John K. 21
 Davies, Philip R. 11
 de Geus, C.H.J. 23
 Dearman, John A. 146
 Deimel, Anton 139
 Dever, William G. 12, 109, 115, 121
 Devries, Simon J. 99
 Diakonoff, Igor M. 37, 38, 140
 Dietler, Michael 173
 Dietrich, Walter 6
 Dobbs-Allsopp, F.W. 125
 Dome, Takuo 32
 Domeris, William 18

- Drinkard, J.F. 77
 Dubrovskii, Sergei 36
 Dunn, Stephen 35, 36, 39

 Earle, Timothy K. 20
 Ehrlich, A.B. 88
 Elat, Moshe 21, 22, 80, 165
 Eldar, Iris 109, 119, 121
 Elyacher, Julia 89
 Engels, Friedrich 35, 36
 Englund, Robert 65
 Engstrom, Christine M.A. 128
 Eph'al, Israel 26, 170, 177
 Eshel, Esther 177

 Farber, Howard Martin 73
 Faust, Avraham 25, 126–127, 179, 187, 190
 Feldman, Marian 75
 Fensham, F. Charles 82
 Ferman, Louis A. 98, 185
 Finkelstein, Israel 12, 24, 25, 106–107, 114, 116, 123, 127–128
 Finley, Moses 21, 68
 Firth, Raymond 47, 49, 89
 Fishbane, Michael 139, 164
 Fleming, Daniel E. 45
 Fogel, Joshua 36
 Foster, Benjamin R. 139, 165
 Frank, Andre Gunder 41
 Frankenstein, Susan 130
 Friedman, Richard Elliott 6
 Fritz, Volkmar 88, 156, 160, 164

 Gal, Zvi 126
 Ganor, Saar 117, 122, 184
 Garelli, Paul 73
 Garfinkel, Yosef 117, 122, 184
 Gaughan, Joseph P. 98, 185
 Gehman, Henry Snyder 138
 Gelb, Ignace J. 140
 Geoghegan, Jeffrey C. 84
 Geva, Hillel 157
 Gilboa, Ayelet 161
 Gitin, Seymour 24, 127, 129
 Gledhill, John 64, 166
 Goddeeris, Anne 65
 Goff, Matthew J. 18
 Golani, Amir 176
 Goldfrank, W.L. 52
 Gonen, Rivka 20
 Goodman, Martin 19
 Gordon, Barry 23
 Gottwald, Norman K. 18, 42
 Grainger, John D. 169

 Grant, Elihu 111
 Gray, John 40, 86, 91, 156, 160, 164, 178
 Greenberg, Raphael 109
 Gurney, O.R. 162
 Guy, P.L.O. 111

 Halperin, Rhoda 67
 Halpern, Baruch 7, 105, 113–115, 133
 Hamilton, Jefferies M. 18
 Hamilton, Robert 111–112
 Harris, J.R. 73
 Hart, Keith 66
 Hawkins, J. David 169
 Hayes, John Haralson 13, 82, 128
 Heltzer, Michael 22, 37–39
 Henry, Stuart 98
 Herman, Menahem 67
 Herr, Larry G. 111
 Herzog, Ze'ev 109, 119, 121
 Hess, Richard 134
 Hicks, John 32
 Hill, Lewis E. 60
 Hodder, Ian 13, 155
 Holladay, John 26, 111, 117–118, 128–129, 157, 184
 Hollander, Samuel 32
 Hopkins, David 186
 Horsley, Richard 18
 Houston, Walter J. 18
 Hunt, Robert 105
 Hurowitz, Victor A. 18, 78, 80
 Hutson, Scott 13

 Ikeda, Yutaka 156, 162
 Ilan, Ornit 108–109, 121
 Isaac, Barry 62

 Jamieson-Drake, David W. 122
 Janssen, J.J. 68, 140
 Jaruzelska, Izabela 18
 Jepsen, Alfred 7
 Jevons, Williams Stanley 33
 Joffe, Alexander H. 116

 Katz, Hayah 23, 26, 177
 Katzenstein, H. Jacob 81
 Kaufman, Ivan 123
 Keimer, Kyle 119
 Kelle, Brad E. 11
 Kemp, Barry 20
 Kenyon, Kathleen 42
 Keynes, John M. 33
 Khoury, Philip S. 116
 Killebrew, Ann E. 107

- King, Philip J. 18, 118
 Kirk, Alan 68
 Kislev, Mordechai 155
 Kitchen, Kenneth A. 12, 86, 87
 Klemm, Dietrich 73
 Klemm, Rosmarie 73
 Kletter, Raz 26, 123, 176
 Knoppers, Gary N. 11, 81, 84, 142
 Knudsen, E.E. 168
 Kochavi, Moshe 110
 Kohl, Phil 41
 Kolalowski, Leslek 36
 Kostiner, Joseph 116
 Kozah, Michael 141, 148
 Krader, Lawrence 35
 Kuan, Jeffrey Kah-Jin 77, 82
 Kugel, James L. 18
 Kuhrt, Amélie 86
 Kuschke, Arnulf 18

 Lamon, Robert S. 111
 Lang, Bernhard 18
 Larsen, Morgens 64, 166
 LeClair, Jr. Edward E. 61, 63
 Lederman, Zvi 109
 Leemans, W.F. 38, 73
 Lehmann, Gunnar 107, 126
 Lemaire, André 7
 Lemche, Nils Peter 12
 Leuchter, Mark 5, 6
 Levine, Baruch A. 143
 Levine, David P. 33
 Levine, Ely 26
 Levy, Thomas 114
 Liphshitz, Nili 190
 Lipiński, Edward 176
 Liverani, Mario 18, 37, 39, 71, 75, 147, 151, 159
 Lohfink, Norbert 18
 Lomnitz, Larissa 98
 Long, Burke O. 79, 85
 Long, V. Philips 12
 Longman, Tremper 12

 Malchow, Bruce V. 18
 Malina, Bruce 67, 68
 Malinowski, Bronislaw 47–50, 52, 56, 68
 Malthus, Thomas 31, 51
 Manning, Joseph G. 21
 Markoe, Glenn E. 81
 Marx, Karl 29, 34–43, 46, 50, 67, 68
 Master, Daniel M. 25, 117
 Matthews, Victor M. 67, 90, 97
 Mauss, Marcel 49, 67, 70, 89

 Mazar, Amihai 12, 81, 105, 106, 112–114, 116, 122, 132–133
 Mazar [Maisler], Benjamin 9, 110, 144–145
 McC. Adams, Robert 37, 155
 McGeough, Kevin M. 20, 75, 143
 McKenzie, Steven L. 5
 Mendelsohn, Isaac 137
 Mendenhall, George 42
 Menger, Carl 33
 Meyer, Eduard 63
 Mill, John Stuart 29, 32, 33, 35, 46
 Millard, Alan 168
 Miller, Maxwell 13, 82, 128
 Milson, David 115
 Minowitz, Peter 30
 Misgav, Haggai 117, 122, 184
 Monroe, Christopher M. 20, 45, 75
 Montgomery, James A. 138
 Moore, Megan Bishop 11
 Moran, William L. 78
 Morris, Ian 21, 182
 Murphy, Catherine 18
 Murr, Andreas 73

 Na'aman, Nadav 24, 120, 123, 128
 Nam, Roger S. 123
 Naveh, Joseph 26, 170, 177
 Nordstrom, Carolyn 183–184
 Noth, Martin 5, 11, 77, 83, 86, 91, 124, 138

 O'Connor, David 140
 O'Leary, Brendan 35
 Oakman, Douglas E. 68
 Ofer, Avi 113
 Oppenheim, Leo 51, 54, 55, 65, 70, 167
 Orton, E. 155
 Otto, Eckart 99
 Owen, David I. 74

 Panoff, Michel 52
 Pardee, Dennis 38
 Patnaik, Prabhat 35
 Peckham, Brian 86
 Perrot, Jean 109, 119, 121
 Person, Raymond F. 5, 7
 Petersen, David L. 99
 Piepkorn, Arthus Carl 168
 Pitt-Rivers, Julian 89, 97
 Plattner, Stuart 63
 Polanyi-Levitt, Kari 62
 Polanyi, Karl 2–5, 16, 29, 30, 51–65, 67, 68, 70, 102–104, 153, 154, 157, 162, 166, 169, 172–174, 181, 192–193

- Polanyi, Michael 60
 Postgate, J.N. 38
 Powell, Marvin 65, 166
 Pritchard, James B. 111, 121
 Provan, Iain W. 12, 91, 164

 Radner, Karen 176
 Rainey, Anson 40, 42, 124, 137, 143
 Rayment-Pickard, Hugh 16
 Reis, Pamela Tamarkin 91
 Renfrew, Colin 3, 13
 Renger, Johannes M. 59, 65, 169
 Ricardo, David 29, 31, 32, 33
 Robertson, John F. 140
 Rofé, Alexander 99
 Röllig, Wolfgang 64, 169, 170
 Römer, Thomas 5, 7, 86
 Rosenfeld, Henry 89
 Rotstein, Abraham 4, 57

 Sáenz-Badillos, Angel 86
 Sahlins, Marshall 54, 58, 67, 93
 Saller, Richard 21, 182
 Sandoval, Timothy J. 18
 Sass, Benjamin 176
 Schäfer-Lichtenberger, C. 189
 Scheidel, Walter 21, 182, 184
 Schipper, Bernd 157
 Schley, Donald 156, 160
 Schloen, J. David 20, 39, 42, 43, 45, 68, 129
 Schneider, Anna 139
 Schneider, Harold K. 61
 Schneider, Jane 41
 Schniedewind, William M. 6, 7, 87, 116, 122, 178
 Schweizer, Harald 99
 Segovia, Fernando F. 43
 Seibert, Eric A. 82, 138
 Seow, Choon Leong 18, 159
 Serice, Elman 62
 Shea, William 124
 Shearing, Linda 5
 Sherratt, Andrew 160–161
 Sherratt, Susan 160–161
 Shiloh, Yigal 107, 111, 119, 121, 190
 Shipton, Geoffrey M. 111
 Sieglitz, Robert R. 9
 Silver, Morris 23, 154–155, 160
 Simkins, Ronald A. 67
 Singer-Avitz, Lily 24
 Skinner, John 91
 Sivan, Daniel 178
 Skalik, Peter 189

 Slotsky, Alice L. 64, 159, 169
 Smend, Rudolph 6
 Smith, Adam 4, 29–31, 33, 34, 51, 52, 68, 154, 182, 193
 Smith, Estellie M. 66
 Smith, Maurice G. 47
 Snell, Daniel C. 64, 65, 169, 176
 Soggin, J. Alberto 13, 137
 Stager, Lawrence E. 24, 42, 124, 126, 129–130, 145, 186
 Stanish, Charles 58, 124
 Stansell, Gary 67
 Starkey, James 112
 Stegemann, Ekkehard 54, 93
 Stegemann, Wolfgang 54, 93
 Stein, Gil J. 41, 42
 Stern, Ephraim 26
 Stevens, Marty 19
 Stigler, George 61
 Streck, M. 167
 Struve, V.V. 36, 37
 Suriano, Matthew 124
 Swedberg, Richard 43
 Sweeney, Marvin 7, 86, 95–96, 134, 164, 167
 Sweet, Ronald F.G. 73

 Taba, Hamdan 122
 Tadmor, Hayim 161, 167–168, 170–171
 Tappy, Ron E. 117, 122, 125
 Tebes, Juan Manuel 26, 129
 Temin, Peter 64, 159, 169
 Thareani (Sussely), Yifat 25, 120, 128–129
 Thompson, Christine 130, 161, 176
 Thompson, R. Campbell 168
 Thompson, Thomas L. 11
 Tropper, Josef 169
 Tsevat, Matitiah 21, 22
 Tsukimoto, Akio 110
 Tufnell, Olga 112

 Ullendorff, Edward 86
 Ussishkin, David 110, 116, 120

 Van Beek, Gus 87, 128
 Van de Mieroop, Marc 45, 65
 Van der Kooij, Gerrit 122
 Van der Steen, Evelyn 25, 129
 Van Driel, Govert 141
 Van Seters, John 11
 Van Winkle, D.W. 91
 Vanderhooft, David 7
 Vargyas, Péter 38

- Veenhof, Klaas R. 64, 166
 Veijola, Timo 6
 Veyne, Paul 13
 Viner, Jacob 30
 von Ende, Eleanor T. 60
 Von Ranke, Leopold 13, 14, 16
 Von Reden, Sitta 21

 Wallerstein, Immanuel 40, 41, 42, 182
 Walsh, Jerome T. 91
 Warburton, David 20, 32, 33, 68
 Washington, Harold 18
 Waterman, Leroy 149
 Weber, Max 29, 42–46, 50, 68, 69
 Weidner, Ernst F. 168
 Weinberg, Joel 19
 Weinfeld, Moshe 80
 Weippert, Helga 5–8
 Weiss, Ehud 25, 127, 155, 190
 Westbrook, Raymond 72
 White, Hayden 13

 Whitelam, Keith W. 12
 Whybray, R.N. 18
 Wilson, Robert 99
 Wittfogel, Karl 37
 Wright, Erik Olin 43
 Wright, G. Ernest 18, 111, 134
 Wright, Rebecca 96–97
 Würthwein, Ernst 77

 Yadin, Yigael 26, 107–108, 111–112, 115, 119,
 121, 123
 Yamada, Shigeo 118
 Yan, Yunxiang 58, 84
 Yardeni, Ada 117, 184
 Yoffee, Norman 65

 Zaccagnini, Carlos 37, 39
 Zapassky, Elena 123
 Zertal, Adam 126
 Zorn, Jeffrey 110

SUBJECT INDEX

- accounting 143, 152, 173, 175, 183
- agrarian 17, 21, 45, 105
- agriculture 22, 31, 39, 50, 55, 103, 117, 125, 126, 128, 178, 181, 184 186, 187, 190
- Ahab 10, 114, 121, 126, 144, 145, 148, 150, 164–167, 175, 178
- Amarna 20, 70–74, 76, 78, 80, 84, 89, 94, 96, 102, 137, 152, 181
- anthropology, economic 2, 3, 16, 17, 23, 27–30, 46, 47, 49–51, 57, 61–63, 65, 67, 89, 101
- Arabia 9, 22, 25, 26, 66, 76, 86, 87, 89, 97, 128, 129, 157, 182, 190
- Arad 108–110, 113, 115, 120, 121, 125
 - ostraca 21, 105, 125
- Aramaic 21, 79, 166, 183
- archaeology 12–14, 17, 20, 27, 103, 104, 106, 125, 132, 140
 - Levantine 15, 23, 27
 - “new archaeology” 12, 13
- Ashkelon 25, 129, 130, 155
- Asiatic Mode of Production 35–37, 39
- Assyria 3, 7, 9, 15, 17, 22, 24–26, 38, 45, 64, 71–73, 81, 87, 88, 106, 114, 115, 117–120, 122, 123, 127–129, 130, 133, 141, 145–152, 158–163, 165, 166, 168, 174, 176, 182, 184, 185, 187–190, 193, 194
- Assyriology 15, 34, 63
- Babylon 5, 9, 14, 17, 37, 38, 51, 54, 63, 64, 70–73, 77, 80, 87, 88, 104, 106, 131, 136, 141, 149, 151, 158, 165, 167, 169, 173, 174, 176, 194
- Beersheba 109, 112–115, 119–121, 125, 128
- bribe 66, 91, 152, 175, 183
- Bronze Age 11, 20, 21, 24, 39, 40, 41, 44, 76, 120, 134, 159
 - Bronze Age, Early 72
 - Bronze Age, Late 20, 21, 38, 40, 44, 45, 70, 72–76, 81, 84, 102, 120, 130, 158–161, 163, 181
 - Bronze Age, Middle 72, 73, 120
- Canaanite 81, 82, 98, 138, 171
- Capitalism 4, 19, 31, 34, 35, 40, 41, 43, 50–53, 56, 60, 63, 70, 98, 154, 155, 163, 166, 172, 173, 175, 179
- caravan 22, 25, 50, 64, 133, 158, 165, 183
- centralization 24, 103, 105, 106, 108, 109, 112, 114, 116–118, 121, 122, 124–126, 131, 132, 134, 136, 137, 139, 141–143, 149, 152, 179, 188
- Chronicler 83, 87, 137, 147
- chronology 9, 15, 53, 106, 115, 116, 132
 - “high chronology” 105, 107, 116, 132, 144
 - “low chronology” 105, 106, 107, 109, 115, 116, 132, 133
- city 7, 10, 26, 45, 64, 91, 92, 107–112, 114, 115, 117, 119–122, 125, 129, 139, 157, 160, 165, 167, 169, 170, 175, 190
- city-states 8, 9, 32, 57, 72, 76, 77, 80–82, 118, 120, 161
- coastal plain 24, 117, 144, 190
- coin, coinage 172, 173, 176, 194
- Communist 35, 37
- “competitive feasting” 58, 123, 124
- consumption 1, 3, 30, 99, 103, 123, 129, 163, 186, 188
- cult 71, 91, 95, 110, 140, 141
- Dan 107, 110, 113, 125, 127
- David 9, 76–78, 82, 105, 136, 143, 144, 147
- Davidic 76, 77, 82, 83, 87, 88, 131, 141, 153
- defense (military) 31, 107, 110, 118–120, 123, 128, 132
- Deuteronomistic History 5–8, 14, 15, 17, 67, 76, 82, 83, 86, 88, 90–92, 99, 100, 104, 105, 116, 118, 132–137, 139, 142, 146–150, 152, 153, 157, 160, 162, 163, 166, 167, 170, 189, 190, 193
- Divided Monarchy 148, 151
- economy 4, 19, 23–26, 31–34, 40, 44, 45, 48, 51, 52, 55, 56, 60, 62, 63, 74–76, 82, 98–101, 104, 117, 118, 122, 125, 127, 131, 146, 151, 153, 154, 165, 166, 168, 172, 175–182, 184–186, 189–191, 193, 194
 - informal 10, 65, 66, 182–185, 187
 - market 23, 33, 51, 56, 60, 155, 170
 - monetary 26, 45, 176, 177
 - political 29–31, 33–35, 43, 45–49, 51, 53, 59, 68, 73, 154, 182
 - temple 15, 139
- Edom 25, 125, 129, 157
- Egypt 9, 15, 20–22, 33, 54, 68, 70–78, 81, 114–116, 128, 129, 131, 135, 138–140, 146, 149, 150, 155–158, 160–163, 184, 187

- Ekron 24, 32, 129, 176, 188
 Elijah 95–98, 100
 Elisha 14, 93–96, 98–100, 125, 167, 170–172, 175, 178,
 elite 10, 17, 56, 75, 77, 89, 103, 104, 110, 162, 163, 176, 177, 188, 192
 non-elite 66, 89, 90, 98, 100, 185
 ethno-archaeology 100, 155
 ethnography 12, 13, 46, 59, 64, 97
 Euphrates 75, 133, 135
 excavation 2, 115, 116, 119–121, 139, 144, 176, 186
 exchange, market 2, 4, 34, 40, 50, 54, 56, 57–59, 64, 68, 75, 103, 150, 153–155, 158, 159, 161, 162, 171, 172, 175, 177–181, 191–193
 exchange, reciprocal 50, 53, 56, 60, 67, 75, 76, 87–90, 96, 98, 100, 102, 152, 170, 181, 183, 193
 exile 5–7, 9, 11, 14, 83, 84, 86, 88, 99, 100, 131, 132, 134, 136, 138, 153, 163, 194
 post-exilic 11, 14, 82, 86–88, 99, 100, 159, 193, 194
 pre-exilic 7, 14, 16, 17, 81, 83, 84, 86–88, 100, 104, 125, 132, 134, 137, 141, 142, 160, 163, 166, 181
 export 24, 42, 117, 125, 130, 163, 181, 188–190, 193
 family 4, 38, 39, 44, 45, 48, 53, 55, 61, 71, 72, 120, 130, 134, 135, 141, 146, 171, 172, 179, 182, 185, 186, 188
 feast 47, 54, 58, 100
 feudalism 35–37, 40, 44
 formalism 45, 61, 74, 154, 169, 192
 fortress 108, 113, 114, 120, 125
 Galilee 3, 80, 110, 113, 126, 178
 Geography 8, 9, 12, 36, 75, 103, 107, 116, 124, 133, 143, 160, 165, 169, 172, 190
 Gezer 107, 109, 113, 115, 117, 121, 122, 157, 186
 gift 10, 20, 49, 56, 58, 70–78, 80, 82, 84, 85, 87–99, 102, 124, 125, 138, 140, 145
 gold 9, 10, 22, 49, 64, 71, 73, 74, 78, 80, 83, 85, 90, 93, 118, 136, 145–147, 149, 150, 155, 157, 160, 162, 166, 174–176
 grain 49, 98, 108, 109, 128, 140, 158, 187–190
 Hazor 107–109, 111–113, 115, 119, 121, 125, 127, 157
 Hebrew 8, 11, 13, 19, 21, 67, 78, 86, 90, 97, 114, 124, 145, 158, 166, 170, 171, 174, 178, 194
 Hezekiah 7, 15, 87, 88, 122, 132, 134, 137, 148, 163, 175
 Hiram 15, 76–88, 155, 160–162, 181
 historiography 2, 8, 10–17, 19, 42, 105, 115, 131, 153
homo economicus 33–35, 43, 44, 46–50, 52, 53, 75, 88, 92, 94, 95, 154
homo reciprocans 48, 159
 “honor and shame” 67, 89–91, 97
 horse 22, 40, 111, 135, 156, 157, 160, 162, 173, 174
 import 32, 64, 73, 107, 117, 133, 153, 156, 166, 176, 187, 189, 190
 inflation 167–170, 178
 Iron Age 10, 11, 17, 21, 23, 25, 26, 50, 106, 110, 117, 120–122, 155, 159, 176, 192
 Iron I 108–110, 116, 117, 126, 188
 Iron II 10, 14, 15, 23, 25, 70, 105, 109, 110, 117, 120, 122, 126, 131, 139, 144, 150, 151, 153, 154, 186, 190, 193
 Iron IIA 81, 106–121, 122, 125, 126, 132, 133, 136, 156, 157, 186, 189
 Iron IIB 24, 26, 66, 76, 100, 106, 117–128, 172, 179, 187, 189–190
 Iron IIC 76, 100, 106, 127–131, 177, 184, 188, 190, 193
 ivory 9, 71, 125, 126, 162, 190
 Jerusalem 5, 7, 9, 15, 18, 24, 81, 83, 84, 107, 112, 113, 119, 122, 123, 125, 132, 136, 141, 142, 144, 148, 175, 184, 188, 190
 Jordan 95
 Cisjordan 161, 176
 Transjordan 26, 133, 135, 144, 147, 164, 179
 Josiah 100, 132, 134, 137, 141, 143, 149, 163, 188
 Judaism 106, 194
 Judah 8–10, 15, 22, 25, 26, 67, 87, 88, 104, 113, 123, 125–130, 134, 135, 141, 145, 146, 149, 156, 177, 179, 183, 185–188, 190, 193
 Judean Desert 24, 127, 128, 184, 190
karum 165, 166, 171, 172
 king 8–10, 38, 39, 71, 73, 74, 76–81, 84, 85, 87, 88, 90–96, 98, 101, 112, 114, 118, 125, 126, 131, 133, 137, 138, 141–146, 149, 153, 164, 165, 167–170, 172, 175, 179, 183
 kingship 75, 77, 182
 kingdom 9, 14, 33, 38, 54, 62, 68, 72, 73, 86, 87, 93, 100, 106, 112–114, 118, 129, 133, 138–140, 146, 148, 149, 151, 152, 160, 162, 177

- kinship 4, 39, 49, 52–54, 60, 70–72, 75, 84, 92, 93, 95, 98, 130, 143, 145, 150–152, 161, 172, 181, 184, 189, 192, 193
- labor 10, 31–33, 39, 40, 54, 57, 66, 102, 105, 112, 116–118, 132, 134, 135, 137, 138, 175, 183, 184
corvée 134, 137, 138, 183, 184, 186
- Lachish 110–112, 119, 120, 123, 125
- land 10, 23, 26, 31, 32, 35, 38, 39, 52, 57, 58, 72, 75, 76, 79–83, 105, 118, 119, 122, 126–129, 131, 132, 134, 135, 138, 140, 143–145, 148–150, 154, 157, 160, 161, 168, 169, 173–175, 178, 182, 186, 188, 192
- law 2, 6, 18, 31–33, 45, 49, 102, 143, 145, 150, 154, 166, 174, 178, 184
- Levant 14, 40, 73, 75, 131, 163
Southern 10, 21, 24, 27, 50, 72, 77, 81, 103, 105, 109, 114, 116, 127, 130, 150, 157, 182, 186, 189
Northern 15, 38
- literacy 117, 122, 125
- Mari 137, 145, 160
- material culture 2, 5, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 20, 21, 23, 24, 27, 59, 64, 81, 100, 103, 106, 116, 118, 130, 131, 154, 156, 157, 161, 179, 185, 194
“maximalist” 19, 42
- Mediterranean 8, 75, 82, 89, 97, 144, 190, 194
- Megiddo 107–111, 113–116, 119, 121, 125, 127, 157, 162, 179
- merchant 24, 70, 159, 161, 164–167, 174
- Mesha 15, 112, 146
- Mesopotamia 15, 37, 45, 46, 55, 59, 63, 65, 69, 73, 75, 139, 140, 159, 162, 170, 179, 184, 194
- method 2–5, 7, 12, 13, 17, 19, 29, 30, 45, 55, 62, 74, 103, 104, 140, 152, 153, 164, 180, 182, 185, 190, 191
- metrology *see* weights
- military 24, 42, 72, 75, 86, 94, 104, 110–112, 114, 118, 122, 123, 125, 128, 137, 138, 145, 148, 150, 161, 164, 169, 173, 175, 183, 184, 188
“minimalist” 3, 11, 12, 14
- Moab 9, 112, 145, 179
- money 45, 47, 51, 52, 58–60, 146, 149, 172–176, 178, 179, 188
- Negev 3, 21, 25, 26, 113, 114, 119, 127–130, 133, 155, 186, 188, 190
- Nile 158, 190
- Northern Kingdom 14, 100, 106, 118, 138, 146, 148
- oil 1, 10, 16, 24, 32, 77, 98, 124, 125, 129, 168–172, 174, 178, 187, 188, 190
- Omri 12, 15, 100, 109, 110, 115, 126, 143, 144, 146, 154, 174, 179
- patrimonial 10, 44, 45, 116, 130, 141, 143, 153, 175, 182, 186, 188
- patron 67, 72, 90, 95, 112, 175
- peasant 35, 42, 54, 62, 89, 97, 126
- Persia 3, 10, 11, 15, 17, 63, 64, 70, 84, 86, 87, 137, 141, 151, 158, 169, 194
- Philistia 9, 25, 26, 81, 110, 115, 116, 129, 130, 133, 135
- Phoenicia 8, 15, 22, 25, 32, 76, 77, 79, 80–82, 97, 117, 118, 126, 130, 133, 144, 155, 157, 159–163, 169, 177–180, 182, 189, 190
- poverty 19, 43, 188, 193
- price 31–33, 52, 56, 57, 59, 60, 64, 74, 143, 154, 157, 158, 160, 162, 163, 166–171, 174, 175, 177–179, 190
- priest 141, 142, 150, 152
- priesthood 3, 175
- production 1, 3, 25, 30–33, 35–39, 52, 58, 73, 103, 114, 124, 129, 130, 145, 160, 163, 178, 181, 187, 188, 190
- prophecy 6, 8, 82, 87, 93, 99, 100, 167, 168
- Qarqar, battle of 106, 114, 179
- queen 84–86, 88, 162
- Ramat Raḥel 107, 110, 123, 179
- reciprocity 2, 4, 14, 49, 52–54, 56–59, 60, 66–68, 70–104, 150–155, 161, 178, 180, 181, 183, 185, 186, 191, 192
balanced 54, 84, 85, 89
elite 76–89
general 54, 73
negative 54, 89
non-elite 66, 89–100
vertical 58, 84
- redistribution 2, 4, 8, 10, 27, 39, 52–55, 57, 58–60, 68, 101–157, 161, 173, 178, 180, 181, 183, 186–188, 191–193
international 145–150
Solomonic 131–139, 143
temple 139–143, 152, 183
- Samaria 15, 93, 100, 105, 107, 110, 112, 113, 115, 118, 124, 125, 143, 144, 146, 148, 154, 164, 167–170, 172, 178, 179, 183
- ostraca 14, 21, 58, 123, 124
- seals 21, 105, 123, 176, 194
lmlk 123
- Second Temple 18, 147

- Septuagint (LXX) 77, 82, 88, 149, 159, 166
 Sheba 22, 58, 76, 84–88, 162
 shekel 10, 93, 149, 158, 160, 165, 167–169,
 173, 174, 177
 Shephelah 27, 113, 123, 127
 Sidon 78, 79, 96, 158, 161, 162
 silver 9, 10, 22, 32, 49, 64, 65, 73, 74,
 93–95, 118, 125, 130, 136, 140, 142, 143,
 145–150, 158, 161, 162, 166–169, 171–179
 sociology 1, 11, 56, 173, 189, 194
 socioeconomic 100, 113, 159
 Solomon 8, 9, 14, 22, 66, 76–87, 102, 105,
 111, 113, 131–138, 147, 150, 151, 153, 155–157,
 160–164, 174, 178, 181, 183
 Solomonic 89, 101, 104–107, 109, 115, 116,
 131–134, 136, 137, 143, 147, 151, 156, 160–163
 subsistence 3, 19, 22, 23, 47, 100, 126, 187,
 192
 substantist 27, 30, 47, 60–65, 68, 71, 73,
 74, 76, 88, 94, 101, 153, 156, 159–161, 166,
 171, 172, 180–182, 192
 surplus 4, 19, 34, 35, 54, 77, 125, 181, 186,
 193

 tax 54, 66, 67, 102, 105, 123, 134, 145, 149,
 165, 173, 175, 188
 temple 3, 10, 12, 15, 18, 37, 44, 55, 81, 83,
 104, 108, 111, 131, 132, 135, 136, 138–143, 145,
 147, 148, 150–152, 174–177, 183, 188
 temple economy *see* economy
 toll 26, 31, 57, 63, 66, 128, 157, 165, 183
 topography 44, 46, 103, 109, 157
 trade 9, 10, 15, 17, 20, 22, 24–26, 32, 33, 35,
 47, 50, 51, 53, 54, 56, 57, 59, 64, 65, 70, 71,
 73, 75, 76, 79–82, 102, 125, 128, 129, 131,
 134, 155–163, 166, 172, 174, 175, 181, 182,
 185, 187

 administered 56, 64, 157, 159, 160, 162,
 166, 174
 gift 56
 international 32, 55, 75, 125, 133, 156,
 157, 189
 long-distance 8, 15, 24, 25, 56, 76, 82,
 132, 155–157, 161–164, 178
 Old Assyrian 64, 65, 157, 163, 165, 166
 palatial 70, 83
 trader 59, 64, 70, 82, 122, 157, 158, 174
 treasury 83, 136, 142, 145, 147, 148, 175,
 178, 179, 183
 tribe 25, 47–50, 54, 62, 90, 113, 116, 129,
 134, 144, 151
 tribute 15, 17, 22, 72, 85–88, 102, 104, 105,
 118, 129, 135, 141, 142, 145–150, 152, 162,
 173–175, 190
 Tyre 57, 76, 77, 79–84, 88, 118, 135, 158,
 159, 160, 162, 173, 181

 Ugarit 20, 36, 38, 39, 40, 44, 57, 74, 75, 81,
 123, 124, 134, 137, 143, 160, 178
 United Monarchy 9, 11, 12, 76, 77, 83, 84,
 87, 104, 105, 115, 116, 132, 133, 163, 164

 village 24, 35, 47, 50, 53, 89, 97, 109, 121,
 126

 water systems 107, 112, 119, 120–122
 wealth 25, 57, 61, 64, 82, 83, 86, 87, 91,
 101, 118, 124, 133–135, 137, 138, 162, 163,
 168, 176, 190
 weights 26, 129, 177
 wine 27, 32, 98, 124, 125, 129, 130, 163, 168,
 169, 187, 188, 190